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ABSTRACT

This course, one of 16 sequential courses comprising phase one of a part-time Bachelor of Arts degree program in Australian Studies, traces a number of 19th and 20th century debates about culture and examines both the ways in which cultural groups have been formed and the conditions under which culture is produced in contemporary society. It is designed for independent study combined with tutorial sessions. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the course and its study objectives. Chapter 2 defines the term "culture" in terms of contemporary usage. Chapter 3 traces the development of the idea of culture and Chapter 4 uses the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood as an example of a cultural organization. Chapter 5, "Cultural Changes, 1870-1914" deals with the impact of cultural change. Chapter 6 focuses on cultural production, Chapter 7 presents a model of cultural production, and Chapter 8 considers the debate about mass culture. Chapters 9 and 10 are "The Frankfurt School and the Culture Industry" and "The Concept of Ideology." Tutorial sessions deal with cultural formations, cultural production, and ideology. Also included are lists of required readings, additional readings, a bibliography, and self-assessment questions. (IS)

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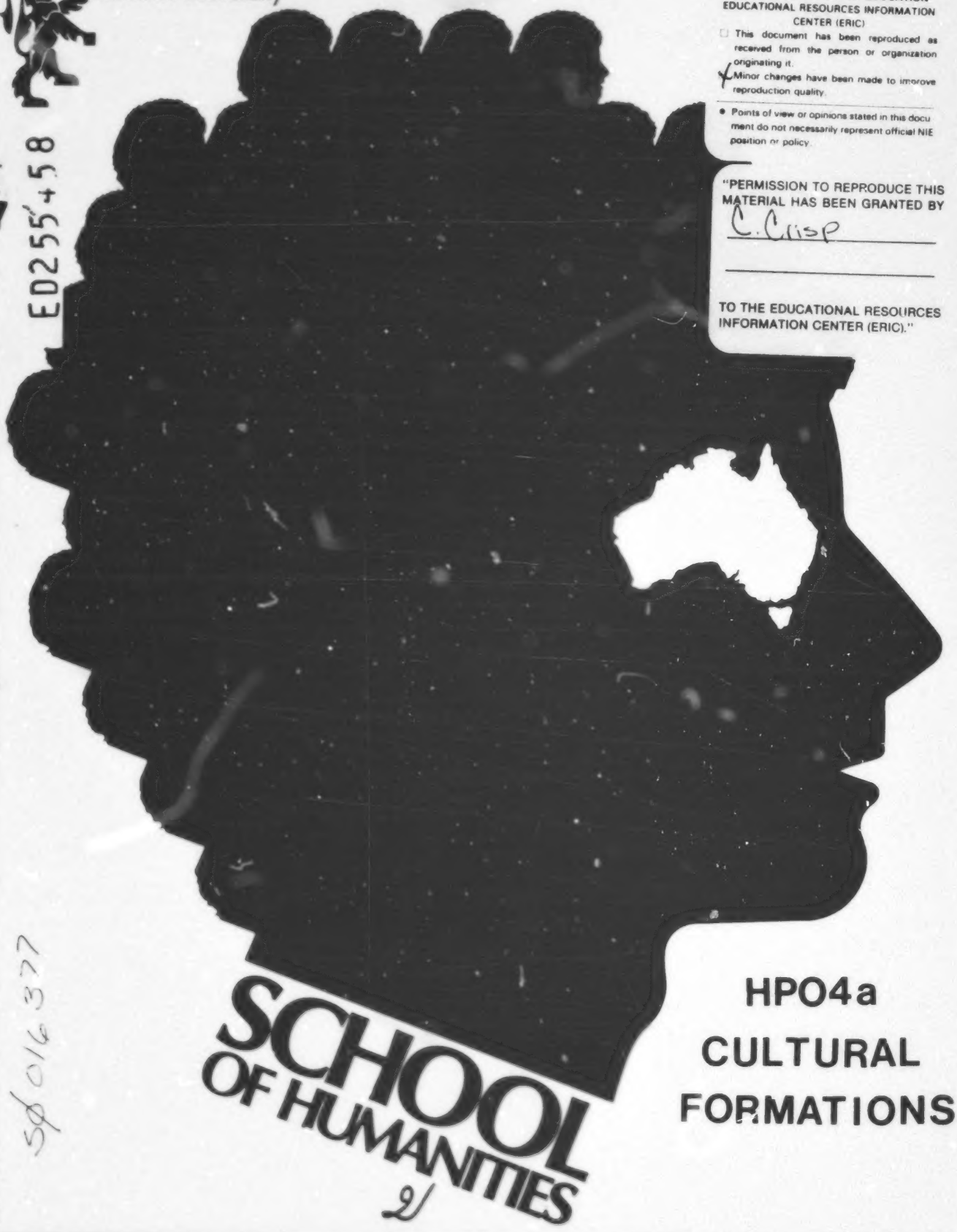

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

SP 016 377

HP04a CULTURAL FORMATIONS

PART TIME BA DEGREE

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

PART-TIME BA DEGREE PROGRAMME

COURSE HP04a

CULTURAL FORMATIONS

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COURSE INFORMATION: HP04a

Course readings

There is no set text for this course. All the reading material necessary for the successful completion of the course is supplied to you in the 23 readings which accompany the study guide. The readings are individually numbered (there is a list on pp.2-3 of the study guide) and grouped together in different coloured covers. Each reading will be carefully introduced to you in the study guide, and any new names or concepts explained before you actually reach the relevant reading. For this reason, it is important that you read the readings in sequence, and follow carefully any instructions given to you in the study guide.

Tutorial activities

There are three optional tutorial activities for this course, details of which are set out on pp.25, 42, and 55.

As you already know from previous courses, the tutorials are intended to provide an opportunity for you:

1. to discuss the most effective ways to work through the course materials
2. to sort out any difficulties you might find in particular readings
3. to gain practice in discussing and explicating arguments and ideas
4. to put to practical use the skills that you will have developed in the course.

Tutorials are, of course, optional. You will note that each tutorial activity requires you to read a new reading. For those of you who do not wish or are unable to attend the tutorial(s), an SAQ is included. Those of you who will be attending should give some thought to these questions, preferably taking some brief notes.

Assessment

The assessment item for this course is in two parts. The first is an essay of about 1500 words, intended to test your ability to apply the skills developed in the course; the second part consists of four short questions, each to be answered in about 250 words, designed to test your knowledge of the key ideas expounded in the course.

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LIST OF READINGS

Readings are numbered in order of use, and aggregated according to the section of the study guide in which they first appear.

Section 2 (pink cover)

Reading 1. Some dictionary definitions (excerpts)

Section 3 (cream cover)

Reading 2. Raymond Williams, 'The idea of culture: (i) the idea and the word' (excerpts)

Reading 3. Raymond Williams, 'The idea of culture: (ii) the standard of perfection' (excerpts)

Reading 4. Raymond Williams, 'The idea of culture: (iii) the new concepts of Art and the artist, and of their relation to society' (excerpts)

Reading 5. Raymond Williams, 'The idea of culture: (iv) culture and classes' (excerpts)

Reading 6. W.F. Connell, 'Education and culture' (excerpts)

Section 4 (yellow cover)

Reading 7. Raymond Williams, 'Formations' (excerpts)

Reading 8. *New Encyclopaedia Britannica* (excerpt) and Harold Osborne ed., 'Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood'

Reading 9. Harold Osborne ed., 'Impressionism' (for Tutorial One)

Section 5 (blue cover)

Reading 10. Malcolm Bradbury, 'English culture 1870-1914' (excerpts)

Reading 11. Malcolm Bradbury, 'The institutions of literary culture' (excerpt)

Section 6 (mauve cover)

Reading 12. Diana Laurenson, 'A sociological study of authorship' (excerpt)

Reading 13. Robert Escarpit, 'The art of publication'

Reading 14. Diana Laurenson, 'Institutionalized and individualized writers' (excerpt)

Reading 15. John Hall, 'Censors, critics, distributors and public libraries' (excerpts)

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Section 7 (orange cover)

Reading 16. Herbert Gans, 'Hollywood films on British screens' (for Tutorial Two)

Section 8 (light blue cover)

Reading 17. R.P. Bilan, *The Literary Criticism of F.R. Leavis* (excerpts)

Reading 18. R.P. Bilan, 'The educated public' (excerpts)

Section 9 (green cover)

Reading 19. Alan Swingewood, 'Mass society as totalitarianism: Mills, Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and the "culture industry"'

Section 10 (white cover)

Reading 20. Open University, *Popular Culture* (excerpts)

Reading 21. John Berger et al., *Ways of Seeing* (excerpt)

Reading 22. Leon Uris, *Exodus* (excerpts) (for Tutorial Three)

Assessment item (red cover)

Reading 23. Raymond Williams, 'Analysing the Bloomsbury fraction' (excerpts)

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1 INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE AND ITS OBJECTIVES

In the courses you have completed so far, you have had the opportunity to read a number of literary works. You will by now appreciate that literary works, although by definition 'fictional', have nevertheless a very real relationship to the societies within which they were written. For example, in Course HP02a, *The Bush Mythology*, you saw how the Australian legend of the bush had been elaborated in a number of ways by different authors in relation to the historical context of nineteenth-century Australia.

Literature is, however, just one part of a wider area of social activity that has come to be called 'culture'. Although this term is familiar enough in relation to phrases such as 'cultural centre' or 'cultural exchange', an intense debate about what constitutes culture, about what kinds of activities it includes and excludes, who produces it and for whom - indeed, about the whole role of culture in society - has been going on for well over a century now. It is an important debate because in the long run how these questions are answered determines, among other things, what kind of education is promoted in our schools and universities (science or art subjects?) and what kind of entertainment we enjoy in our leisure time ('soapies' or Shakespeare?).

In recent years attempts to answer these questions and other related ones (such as What is 'great' art? What is the nature of artistic 'genius'?) have come under the rubric of the newly formed discipline of 'cultural studies'. This discipline aims at explaining major cultural phenomena such as literature, music and the fine arts in general, in relationship to the societies in which they were created. Unlike the more traditional histories of art or literature, cultural studies entails a concern for the practical dimensions of culture - its production, dissemination and consumption. In other words, cultural studies as a discipline lays greater emphasis upon the institutional framework in which culture is produced - the social background of artists, the constraints of working within established genres, the need to meet the demands of the public, the influence of publishers, the response of critics, and so on - than upon the creative role of the individual artist. It is one of the objectives of this course to describe this institutional framework, and to identify its relevance to the production of culture in society.

Cultural studies also shows a great concern for the social basis of culture and cultural production. Most writers and critics who work within this discipline believe that culture and cultural forms such as art and literature have to be located within their social context in order to be adequately explained. This is a view that will reappear throughout this course both in the study guide and in the various readings that you will encounter. To a certain extent, this approach to literature and culture will be familiar to you from Course HP02a, *The Bush Mythology*, where

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'text' and 'context' were seen as two related entities. This course will take this approach much further and will go into the subject in greater detail in an attempt to establish the importance of the social dimension of cultural production. In order to achieve this goal, this course will include ideas and methodologies drawn from a number of areas of academic interest such as sociology, social history and media studies, as well as literary history. This diversity of disciplinary interest will be largely compensated by a fairly narrow concentration on one geographical area, that of Great Britain. The main reasons for such a concentration is that the debate about culture originated in that area, and produces a number of important writers - such as Matthew Arnold and F.R. Leavis - on the subject. It is also important to add that similar, more recent debates in Australia have been largely influenced by the earlier writings of these British critics, a point that will be brought home to you in the next course, HP04b, *Literary Studies*.

This course, which follows a broad chronological line, is roughly divided into four parts:

1. First we will look at the way we normally use the word 'culture' in contemporary society - how it is defined and what sorts of things it includes and excludes.

2. Then we will look at how the concept of culture came to acquire its present meaning in the nineteenth century, and we will spend some time studying the phenomenon of 'cultural formation', paying particular attention to a nineteenth-century example of a cultural formation.

3. In the third section we will look at the ways in which the debate about culture has tried to come to terms with a new set of social conditions prevailing in the twentieth century.

4. We will then come right up to date and look in some detail at how culture is produced in contemporary society and how it interacts with larger social concerns, paying particular attention to the concept of 'ideology'.

The broad chronological structure of the course contributes to meeting four basic objectives:

1. To investigate how the concept of culture came to acquire selective and elitist connotations in response to a series of historical and social factors.

2. To provide a framework in which specific cultural groups and producers can be described and analysed.

3. To examine the relations between social conditions and specific forms of cultural production in modern society.

4. To identify how cultural products such as literary works embody social and political assumptions which can be identified as ideological.

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2 THE TERM 'CULTURE' IN CONTEMPORARY USAGE

It is essential to state from the outset that in this course we are dealing with just one of the meanings of the term 'culture'. Let us briefly return to Course HP01b, *Traditions*. You will remember that culture was defined there as a 'totality of traditions' (p. 39), as something that included a wide variety of social practices, not just artistic, but also religious, legal, ethical, and so on. This is what we might call the 'broad' definition of culture, and is often used by writers working within the discipline called 'cultural anthropology'. A good example of how it is used in that discipline is provided by the entry in the *Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, which is found in reading 1. Have a look at that definition now.

****

Read, Some dictionary definitions, reading 1 (excerpts), sections a. and b.

****

Most of the key terms of that definition (such as 'community', 'institution' and 'ritual') will be familiar to you from earlier courses. Now compare the *Fontana* definition (what I have called the 'broad' definition) with the entry for 'culture' in the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* in reading 1, and then answer the following questions:

SAQ 1

1. Which of the six definitions presented in the *Longman* entry most corresponds to the *Fontana* entry?

2. Excluding definitions 5 and 6 of the *Longman* entry, can you see any common element among the remaining four definitions? Which words or phrases occur in most of the definitions?

The concept of culture that we use in everyday speech is, then, restricted to certain types of social activities and social products. As you saw from the *Longman* entry, the activities that we classify as 'cultural' are largely mental or intellectual rather than bodily or physical, and the same goes for the products of those activities. Thus, in spite of the reference to the development of the 'mind or body' in definition 4 of the *Longman* entry, the significant social activity of sport or the more mundane practice of changing a flat car tyre clearly do not count as 'cultural', whereas it is equally clear that most artistic activities (such as playing the violin or writing a poem) would be granted the

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status of culture. The term, then, is a selective one. It is also a highly privileged one. The point that was made by Bourdieu on p.1, reading 14, of Course HP01b, *Traditions*, is also relevant here. As we shall see in section 3 below, most writers on culture have tended to assume that 'true' culture (and this has been defined by different writers in different ways) is only accessible to a minority in any one society, the implication being that it is only a minority that will have guaranteed for itself material conditions (including leisure, instruction in drawing certain distinctions and the development of certain aesthetic capacities) sufficiently to allow it to appreciate the finer things of life. Consider, for example, the next two definitions of culture, included in reading 1 above. They are both taken from historical dictionaries, the first from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and the second from *A Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles*.

****

Read Some dictionary definitions, reading 1 (excerpts), sections c. and d.

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Notice that the entry from the *O.E.D.* makes explicit reference to culture involving the 'cultivating of manners'. This adds, at least by implication, an important societal dimension to the acquisition of culture, since 'manners' are traditionally associated with people of 'good breeding' (this is how they are defined in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary)*, and hence of a higher social standing than the majority. This association of culture with social prestige (and, of course, the absence of culture with social deficiency) is clearly made in Abbott's use of the word in his book *North and South*, which was published in 1860 (see reading 1, section d). Notice how a system of oppositions is set up, with negro, cabin, sleeping on straw, eating corn and bread (the cheapest of foods) on one side, and book, taste and culture on the other side. It is worth bearing in mind that no mention is made of cultural forms such as singing or dancing that the negro might have produced for himself. What we have in Abbott's entry is, in fact, a premonition of the 'high culture' thesis, which argues that only certain 'superior' types of culture should be recognised as genuinely 'cultural'. We shall return to this thesis for detailed discussion in section 8.

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SAQ 2

1. Basing your answer on the preceding discussion and on the materials in reading 1, write two paragraphs outlining the kinds of activities that in our society are generally considered 'cultural' and those that are definitely <u>not</u> considered to be 'cultural'.

2. Basing your answer on the definitions given in *Longman, Oxford English Dictionary* and the *Dictionary of American English,* briefly characterise the social attributes associated with 'cultured' people.

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3 THE HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT OF 'CULTURE'

3.1 The standard of perfection

As we have seen from the preceding section, a common feature of most definitions of culture is the assumption that it constitutes a narrow realm above or beyond the world of everyday activities. Indeed, the pursuit of culture has been seen as involving the individual in acceptance of values that are in direct opposition to those forms of behaviour associated with commercial and industrial activities. Furthermore, it has been suggested that such values and such forms of behaviour pose an active threat to the preservation of traditional cultural values. How was this perceived? Why should anyone argue for a narrow definition of culture, one that excludes whole areas of human activity?

Some answers to these questions are provided in the next set of readings, taken from a long essay by Raymond Williams entitled 'The idea of culture'. In this essay, which is divided into four sections, Williams traces the emergence of the concept of culture in the nineteenth century and explains how and why it came to acquire its present meaning. In the first section, entitled 'The idea and the word', Williams briefly explains how the term 'culture' was first used by the English poets William Wordsworth (1770-1850) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), by the literary critic Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), and by the religious writer and educationalist John Henry Newman (1801-1890). Reference is made in the essay to the complex period in Britain's social and economic history traditionally known as the Industrial Revolution. This will be discussed later in the study guide.

****

Read Raymond Williams, 'The idea of culture: (i) the idea and the word' (excerpts), reading 2, and answer the following questions.

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SAQ 3

1. Having read the first section of Williams's essay, briefly trace the significant stages and the writers involved in the development of the term 'culture'.

2. According to Williams, what was the emergence of the concept of culture a response to?

In the next section of his essay, 'The standard of perfection', Williams describes how the concept of culture

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emerged in the nineteenth century as a critical response to the economic and social effects of the Industrial Revolution. This term refers to the upheaval that took place in the socio-economic life of Britain between about 1700 and 1850. It was a period marked by the introduction of radically new techniques into the processes of industrial production, such as the coking process in the production of iron (first used in 1735), the development of the steam engine (1775) and the power-driven loom (1786), and, above all, by the increasing organisation of work forces into factories. Together with these new industrial changes went a whole series of agrarian reforms - the redistribution of open fields, the dispossession of small farmers, the enclosing of common lands by wealthy land owners. All of this led to a mass exodus from the countryside and to the break-up of traditional centres of rural life. This demographic transition has been represented as laying the base for the notion, cultivated in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, that the Industrial Revolution had destroyed the 'organic' values of traditional Britain. (For a full discussion of the notion see section 8 of this course and the accompanying readings.)

These changes in the socio-economic character of Britain were accompanied (and brought about) by the new commercial spirit of liberalism, which laid great stress upon a free-market economy functioning beyond state intervention, and upon the right of the individual to choose his or her place within that economy. One influential spokesman for this new economic philosophy was Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). Bentham is mentioned in the next reading in association with the doctrine of utilitarianism, the basic premise of which stated that the value of an activity or a thing lay solely in its practical and quantifiable use value. This led him to the famous dictum that in politics or social policy the ultimate goal was 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'. (This is a point of view you have encountered before, in Course HP03a, *Community and Identity*, section 2.3). For many writers and artists, Bentham's philosophy seemed to deny an appreciation of the 'quality' of life, of, for example, the enjoyment of nature as a thing of beauty rather than as a source of agricultural income. Williams discusses some of the objections to Bentham in his essay, but it is important to remember that many artists (like Coleridge) condemned Bentham less on account of his economic theories than because he represented for them a prevalent tendency to overstate the importance of the material world (business, industry, finance, society) at the expense of the less tangible and quantifiable world of emotions, feelings and sensibility. In short, what they objected to was the general implications of 'Benthamism'.

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Read Raymond Williams, 'The idea of culture: (ii) the standard of perfection' (excerpts), reading 3. Then answer the following questions.

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SAQ 4

1. Summarise Williams's account of the objections of Coleridge and J.S. Mill to Benthamism.

2. According to Coleridge and Newman, who should act as the preservers of culture in a community?

3.2 The new concepts of art and the artist, and of their relation to society

In the preceding reading, Raymond Williams has argued that the drastic social and economic changes undergone by Britain in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries led many writers and artists to fear for the continuing existence of those non-utilitarian values traditionally associated with art or religion. In the next reading, Williams describes how one contemporary group of writers - the Romantics - self-consciously set out to preserve and extend these values, fashioning them into the basis for a new aesthetic practice. To a certain extent, you will already be familiar with the premises of the Romantic aesthetic: its stress upon the individual creativity of the author, its insistence upon originality, and its concern for the 'authentic' roots of personal experience and language, from Course HP03b, *Authorship*. In the next reading, Williams goes into greater detail concerning the origins of the Romantic movement, and quotes from the Romantics themselves.

The Romantics are particularly important for us in this course, because it was on their rather idealised view of artistic creation that they developed the concept of culture as a force resistant to the pressures of the material or social world. (We will see in section 3.4 below how Matthew Arnold developed this point and defined culture as something that the individual uses to critically assess the standards prevalent in contemporary society.) What were the Romantics trying to achieve in their art, and what did they object to in the art of their contemporaries? In stressing the role of personal creativity and of inspiration, the Romantics set themselves against that style of literature and painting that had been dominant in the eighteenth century, which had been known as Classicism. In the English context, its major representatives were John Dryden and Alexander Pope (in literature) and Sir Joshua Reynolds (in painting). The Classical artist looked to the great masters of the past,

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particularly to Greece and Rome, to provide a model for his own art. Likewise in poetry, the tried and tested conventions of rhyme and metre, such as the standard iambic pentameter line, formed the basis for the epic poems of Dryden and Pope. Apart from technique, whole subjects and themes were borrowed from established repertoires and classical mythology as the discussion of rhetorical composition in the previous course has shown. The minor eighteenth-century poet, Mark Akenside (1721-1770), for example, begins his 'Ode to the Evening Star' with the following lines:

> Tonight retired, the queen of heaven
> with young Endymion stays:
> And now to Hesper it is given
> Awhile to rule the vacant sky.

Finally, in general aesthetic terms, the Classicists believed in balance and proportion, with the highly lyrical or personalised forms being excluded.

What the Romantics objected to in Classical art was, as Williams makes clear, its derivative nature, the fact that it was created in 'imitation of works already done'. This, however, was a misconception; the Classicists were not imitating the past for its own sake, but were rather trying to capture universal artistic truths, and these, they believed, had been first formulated by the Classical artists of Greece and Rome. As you saw in Course HP03b, *Authorship*, the Romantics came to define their own aesthetic goals in terms of a rejection of the 'poetic diction' of the Classicists (as exemplified in Wordsworth's preface to his *Lyrical Ballads* of 1802), choosing instead language capable of expressing 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling'. It is this idea of the directly expressive or unmediated quality of Romantic writing that lies behind the model of artistic creation as personal inspiration that Williams discusses in reading 4. In that reading, Williams describes also how the Romantics' image of the artist gives a privileged position to the role of the cultural producer, whilst reducing the receivers of that culture - the reading public - to the role of unsympathetic and ignorant philistines lacking the sensibility and insight to recognise the truth of what they read.

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Read Raymond Williams, 'The idea of culture: (iii) the new concepts of art and the artist, and of their relation to society' (excerpts), reading 4, and complete the following SAQ.

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SAQ 5

Write one paragraph in answer to each of the following questions on Williams's account of the development of the idea of culture among the English Romantics:

1. What was the Romantic concept of the artist?

2. How did the Romantic artists view their public?

3. In what form did the distinction between the 'cultivated' and 'uncultivated' arise in nineteenth-century English thought?

3.3 Culture and classes

The last reading suggested how the Romantic account of artistic creation pointed to a selective view of culture, which emerged in the nineteenth century; that is, a view which selects only a few activities to count as culture. As Williams made clear in that reading, the Romantics believed that large areas of the public were not only incapable of appreciating art but were actually hostile to it. This belief represents an early statement of the notion of the essential difference of the artist, i.e., the notion of artistic alienation and its supposed truth, which was to become one of the dominant features of artistic self-understanding in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We will return to this notion when we come to consider artistic movements or 'cultural formations', and the variety of ways in which they can interact (or fail to interact) with society (see section 4 below). For the moment let us consider in greater detail the central questions posed by the last reading - For whom does the artist create? Who are the consumers of culture?

An answer is suggested in the next and final reading from Williams's essay, where we are told of how the Romantics and their contemporaries responded to these questions. In deciding which sections of society were capable of appreciating culture and hence could act as its 'guardians' writers on the subject formulated answers that included a new and significant political element. Williams in his reading describes what that element was, namely a growing awareness in English political life, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, of the working classes. This was prompted by a number of important reforms made in the franchise from 1832 (the date of the First Reform Bill). During that period a number of working-men's associations were initiated, from the London Working Men's Association of 1836, which was later to form the basis of the Chartist movement, to the first consumers' cooperative, founded by the socialist Robert Owen in 1844. The new role that the

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working classes were beginning to play in the political life of the nation posed problems for the selective concept of culture that had been created by the Romantics, and it was precisely these problems that Matthew Arnold confronted in his book *Culture and Anarchy*, which appeared in 1859. This will be discussed in the reading. Williams's next reading provides a good introduction to Arnold's discussion.

****

Read Raymond Williams, 'The idea of culture: (iv) culture and classes (excerpts), reading 5, and answer the following questions.

****

SAQ 6

1. Whom does Coleridge consider to be the potential transmitters of culture?

2. What criticisms were made of the Working Men's Associations in respect to their attitude to culture?

3.4 Culture and anarchy

'We must educate our masters.' Macaulay's famous statement, made in a speech following the passing of the Second Reform Bill in 1867, could almost serve as a motto for Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*. As the title indicates, Arnold developed a concept of culture very much in response to the growing threat to the stability of British society brought about by a number of socio-economic changes. We saw in our introduction to the last reading what some of those changes were, and our next reading, taken from W.F. Connell's *The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold* goes into further detail on the social and political background to Arnold's major theoretical work. We cannot understand Arnold's notion of culture without such background information or without recognising that Arnold's stance in writing *Culture and Anarchy* was to 'recommend culture as the great help out of our present difficulties'.

Culture, defined by Arnold as 'the best which has been thought and said in the world', was intended to provide the source of values capable both of resisting the tide of materialism (which in his preface he calls 'Americanism') and more specifically to provide a basis for consensus in a society in the process of losing its traditional political hierarchy. This latter point is particularly important, because with it Arnold comes close to the modern idea that culture, by smoothing over individual differences of cl[illegible] and status, in fact contributes to the continuing domi[illegible]e

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of the ruling class. Culture, then, has a social function to perform. This point has recently been emphasised by the scholar and critic, Terry Eagleton, in relationship to the emergence of English studies in British universities in the mid-nineteenth century.

> English studies in our society were actually *born* in crisis. English literature began to be systematically studied in schools and universities in the nineteenth century for blatantly ideological reasons. Literature would foster in working people a pride in middle-class cultural achievements, thus creating class solidarity at a time when the rules of the society badly needed it. It would stand in for the failing influence of religion, offering a whole alternative moral ideology; it would displace people's material needs and concerns to a falsely 'spiritual', timeless level. And finally, it would breed a sense of national mission and identity - *English* literature - at a time when England was passing through its epoch of high imperialism.
>
> Literary studies should reflect on the unexamined ideological assumptions which inform its readings and judgments of literature; and question the artificial isolation of the 'literary' from other social and historical discourses. (*Listener*, 1983, pp.12-13.)

In his obvious concern for the social function of literature and culture, Eagleton writes from a position within the discipline of cultural studies. The next reading is taken from a book by W.F. Connell, who does not work from within this perspective. This is a good introduction to Arnold's ideas, although Connell tends to stress the progressive side of those ideas.

Arnold was indeed 'progressive' in certain respects but only in that tradition of paternalistic mid-nineteenth-century liberalism that sought to improve the moral or spiritual condition of the individual, whilst often ignoring the fact that appreciation of culture presumes the existence of at least a moderate standard of living. In the final analysis, Arnold's rejection of materialism leads him to underestimate the importance of the material conditions of society. Connell, as we have said, outlines the key terms in Arnold's concept of culture.

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Read W.F. Connell, 'Education and culture' (excerpts), reading 6, and complete the following SAQ.

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SAQ 7

1. From your reading of the study guide and of the chapter from Connell's book, which political, social and economic factors influenced Arnold's concept of culture? (about 100 words)

2. According to Connell, what are the three main components of Arnold's concept of culture?

Summary

Let us pause for a moment to review what we have done so far in the first three sections of the course. We have seen that the concept of culture that we employ in everyday usage was formed in the nineteenth century and was heavily influenced by the writings of the English Romantics, particularly as they tried to define their opposition to the Industrial Revolution. The definition of culture that they elaborated was a narrow one; it was intended to exclude both the principles of industrial organisation and the theories of socio-economic utilitarianism that had accompanied and made possible the Industrial Revolution. The concept of culture, as it was developed by the Romantics, has a certain 'idealist' slant; they considered only in passing how such a concept could be implemented in society or who its preservers and mediators should be. It is not until we reach Matthew Arnold that a more pragmatic concern for its implementation in society becomes evident. In his *Culture and Anarchy*, Arnold retains the narrow Romantic definition of culture but argues that social stability can only be assured if some sort of consensus is reached between the different social classes. This consensus, according to Arnold, must take place beyond the material basis of each class in society in the realm of a common culture. Arnold does not, however, explain how this is to be achieved, nor does he attempt to analyse the way in which culture is produced and consumed in society. Arnold was a highly influential writer, and many of his ideas have been taken over by later writers such as F.R. Leavis. We will return to that debate in section 8 of this course. But now we must turn away from the nineteenth-century debate about culture to look at how forms of culture are actually produced in society.

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4 CULTURE AND CULTURAL FORMATIONS

In this section we are going to take our first steps in analysing the ways that culture is produced in society. In keeping with the methodology of cultural studies, we are going to consider the supra-individual institutional framework in which this takes place. For, in spite of the Romantics' insistence upon the importance of 'inspiration' and 'creativity' (terms with which you will be familiar from Course HP03b, *Authorship*), it is a fact of cultural history that artists rarely work in total isolation from other artists or from society in general. On the contrary, artists often have contact with one another, and sometimes even combine on joint projects (as Wordsworth and Coleridge did on the anthology and poem, *The Lyrical Ballads*, published in 1801.)

Cultural and literary history is, in fact, full of examples of individual artists coming together into groups in order to realise joint projects or to ensure a fuller dissemination of their work. What they form when they come together in this way has been variously defined as 'schools', 'movements' or 'groups'. Raymond Williams has coined one word to cover all these different phenomena; he calls them 'formations', and in the next reading, taken from his book *Culture*, Williams briefly describes the different formations that have come into existence over the past five hundred years or so. Before turning to that reading, let us just consider what Williams is trying to achieve.

As we saw in the summary at the end of the preceding section, the notion of culture that both the Romantics and Matthew Arnold (and, more recent critics such as F.R. Leavis, for that matter) have worked with is one that tends to idealise the process of cultural production (they would probably call it 'creation'). Although they are sometimes vague about the actual practices that constitute culture, most of these writers and critics would agree that culture would embrace certain artistic or aesthetic phenomena, such as literature, music, painting, and so on. It is these phenomena that best embody the non-mechanistic, non-materialist, non-utilitarian values that these cultural theorists see threatened in nineteenth- and twentieth-century society. For this reason, they argue that the artist does not belong to the social world, but exists above it, is a moral custodian, social critic, moral judge, the embodiment of a case for personal ethics.

It is this view of the artist that Williams tries to dismantle by showing how artists do not create out of a purely personal perspective, but rather exist in relationship to quite specific modes of cultural production - modes which change with time as the societies in which these artists live change. At this stage in his analysis of cultural functions, Williams restricts himself to analysing the structure and formal organisation of such formations. He has little to say about the social determinants of these formations. This is not a problem; the categories that

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Williams notes will be expanded in section 6. For the meantime let us see what kinds of cultural formations have existed in the past.

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Read Raymond Williams, 'Formations' (excerpts), reading 7, and then complete the following SAQ.

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> SAQ 8
>
> Read Williams's sketch of the conditions of membership of one of the earlier types of cultural formation and briefly indicate how they would have conflicted with the attitudes of the Romantic artist.

4.1 Defining cultural formations

As reading 7, from Williams, testifies, the artist produces his art within a complex context. The work of his contemporary artists, the rules and regulations of the formation that he belongs to, the specific wishes of patrons and the need to follow dominant styles exert their different influences upon the individual creativity of the artist. At this stage in his book, Williams is simply stressing the important fact that the involvement of individual artists in groups, movements or associations, is an essential condition for artistic creation. Williams does not claim that the concept of 'cultural formation' can adequately cover all these diverse factors. The concept of cultural formations does not, for example, cover the more material determinants of artistic creation, such as the social background of the author (his class, education, race and so on), or the pressures exerted by publishers, themselves responding to market needs. We will return to these more material conditions of cultural production and dissemination in a later section, where we will try to locate Williams's concept of cultural formation within a broader notion of cultural production. Before we go any further in looking at the workings of cultural formations it is useful to indicate something of the different outlines that such formations can take. In fact, Williams continues his book *Culture* by doing precisely this. He suggests that cultural formations can be defined in two basic ways:

(a) in terms of their internal organisation
(b) in terms of their external relations.

In the first category we can identify a number of different types of cultural formations.

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4.1.1 Internal organisation

1. Those formations based on formal membership, with varying modes of internal authority or decision-making, and of constitution and election. Most of the famous academies of painting (such as the British Academy in the eighteenth century) were of this kind. Here, the individual practitioners would elect a president (in the case of the British Academy, the most famous was Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792)), and jointly invite other painters to become members. A more up-to-date example would be the various writers' committees to be found in the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries. Such academies or committees act in a highly selective way in the formation of a national culture, since membership of them is open only to those individuals prepared to toe the orthodox line in the area of artistic activity.

2. Those formations not based on formal membership, but organised around some collective public manifestation, such as an exhibition, a group press or periodical, or an explicit manifesto. This is a more common formation than the first type. In fact, most of the great artistic movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would fall into this category. Such groups, like the Impressionists, might well have an internal hierarchy with unofficial 'leaders', but the coherence of such formations was established largely through a common commitment to a number of aesthetic goals or principles, often published in the form of a manifesto.

3. Those formations not based on formal membership or any sustained collective public manifestation, but in which there is conscious association or group identification, either informal, or occasionally organised, or at times limited to immediate working relations. These types of formation are less easy to define, since they do not seek to create any definite identity. They often have to be defined in terms of affinity of style or personal influence. Certain twentieth-century movements, such as the German New Objectivists never consciously thought of themselves as a homogeneous group held together by formal membership (formation type 1) or unified by any collective public manifestations (formation type 2). They were a loosely knit group of painters and writers, working at the same time (1925-1930) and in the same place (Berlin), who followed certain basic stylistic principles (clean graphic outlines and geometric forms) and depicted a certain type of subject matter (city-scapes and industrial objects). In fact, it is only in retrospect, through the research of art or literary historians who perceive a common thread running through the work of these artists, that such a diverse group can be said to constitute a unified 'formation'.

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4.1.2 External relations

In terms of external relations, Williams has identified the following three categories:

1. Specialising, as in the case of sustaining or promoting work in a particular medium or field. These formations are fairly rare. One example would be the English Royal Society of Painters, Etchers and Engravers, which was founded in 1880 to encourage work in the medium of etching and engraving on wood, metal and other materials.

2. Alternative, as in the cases of the provision of alternative facilities for certain kinds of work, where it is believed that existing institutions exclude or tend to exclude these. One such example would be the Shakespeare and Company Press, set up in Paris in 1922 to publish the work of British and American emigrées, who could find no other publisher for their innovative and often highly controversial material. The classic modern novel by James Joyce, *Ulysses*, first appeared in this press, whilst being banned in all English-speaking countries.

3. Oppositional, in which alternative formations develop into an active opposition to the established institutions, or more generally to the social conditions within which these exist. Here, artists consciously take a stance against the prevailing artistic norms. This tendency has already been encountered in our discussion of the Romantics. Since their time it has become almost a defining feature of the formations of modern art that they attack the more conservative institutional formations on account of their academicism, 'inauthenticity' or lack of originality. At times this advocacy of an oppositional aesthetic becomes allied to a political strategy, with artists extending their rejection of dominant artistic trends to a parallel rejection of the social practices, institutions or beliefs upon which those dominant trends are based. This was the case with the French artistic movement of Surrealism, which gradually moved away from a pure non-representational or anti-realist aesthetic to embrace a self-conscious, left-wing political ethos.

4.2 A nineteenth-century cultural formation - the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

Working for the moment within Williams's categories, let us take a closer look at an example of an actual cultural formation, at an example that Williams himself develops - the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. This was an important cultural formation in nineteenth-century England. According to the writer and critic, Stephen Spender:

> Pre-Raphaeliteism ... canalized a considerable impulse in English life. This was the resistance

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> of poetic ideas to the nineteenth century and to the Industrial Revolution. There is a clear and pure stream here which flows from Oliver Goldsmith's poem *The Deserted Village*, published in 1770, through the paintings and poetry of the Romantic poet, William Blake and his circle, through the Pre-Raphaelites and the art critic, John Ruskin, and William Morris and the early socialist movement to the Aesthetic movement of the 1890s, where it becomes somewhat muddied. (Spender, 1974, p.124.)

Spender is not asserting, of course, that the Romantic legacy can be seen as a unified whole, or that all artists worked within it. (In fact, some of the best known novelists of the day, such as Charles Dickens or Anthony Trollope, showed great readiness to depict the problems of an industrialised Britain.) The point Spender is making is that those writers and critics who were influential in establishing the selective definition of culture did so within a set of assumptions that was shared by artists as diverse as Oliver Goldsmith, writing towards the end of the eighteenth century, and Oscar Wilde, writing towards the end of the nineteenth century. The Pre-Raphaelites are particularly significant from the point of view of this course because they created their art at the very time that the selective concept of culture was reaching its most forceful and sophisticated representation in the work of Matthew Arnold, particularly in *Culture and Anarchy*. We are going to look at the Pre-Raphaelites from two distinct but related angles:

(a) to see to what extent they can be approached or explained in terms of Williams's categories of cultural formation

(b) to see to what extent they represent the selective definition of culture that emerged during the same period.

Let us take Williams's first set of categories first - those of internal organisation. Turn back to section 4.1.1 and re-read it. Then complete the following SAQ.

SAQ 9

Even before reading about the Pre-Raphaelites, anticipate the kinds of information you would require in order to describe the internal organisation of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. (You might well divide your answer into three short sections.)

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4.2.1 Internal organisation of Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

Now let us see how much of this information is supplied by two standard entries on the Pre-Raphaelites from reference works. They are taken from the *New Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the *Oxford Companion to Art*. They contain a lot of information in a short space, so read them carefully.

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Read *New Encyclopaedia Britannica* (excerpt), reading 8, and Harold Osborne ed., 'Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood', reading 9.

****

We are now in a position to start answering some of our questions. It is clear that the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood had no formal membership. The original founders of the group - Rossetti, Hunt and Millais - were all close friends and students at the Royal Academy of Art in London. Membership of the group was secured by personal ties and an agreement on artistic aims. Likewise, it is not possible to establish a hierarchy within the formation (although Rossetti is traditionally thought of as the leading member, this was never an official feature of the formation). The collective public manifestations of the group were centred largely in exhibitions and a journal. The latter was called *The Germ: Thoughts towards Nature in Poetry, Literature and Art*, and was published from 1850 onwards. In one of the early editions, the aims of the Brotherhood are outlined. We are told that 'each artist should ... obey his own individual impulse, act upon his own perception and study of nature rather than imitating some extant style and manner, and applying the cut-and-dry rules enunciated by A from the practice of B or C'. From 1849, the Pre-Raphaelites entered paintings in a number of major public and private exhibitions, signing the initials PRB in the corner of each painting - a procedure which served to establish them as a homogenous formation in the eyes of the public. Finally, and most importantly, the group seems to have shared a number of artistic practices, such as choice of subject matter (themes drawn from religion and medieval literature) and formal techniques (clear brush strokes and bright colours). Even without the public manifestations (the journal only ran to four issues and the number of exhibitions became fewer and fewer), the Pre-Raphaelites showed clear signs of a conscious association or group identification, which is the third kind of internal organisation Williams describes.

4.2.2 The external relations of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

As far as the specialising function of the Pre-Raphaelite formation is concerned, it is obvious that they did not promote any new artistic medium, working instead within the conventional framework of oil painting. The exception to this was William Morris, a later follower of the Pre-

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Raphaelites, who championed innovative work in etching, wood carving and other 'folk' crafts. Likewise, it is hardly possible to identify alternative facilities for the production or exhibition of their work. Like most artists working within the post-Romantic world, the Pre-Raphaelites' theoretical rejection of the tastes of a philistine public did not enable them to dispense with its patronage. In terms of their production of paintings, they would have attracted individual buyers to their exhibitions; whilst in the case of their writings (the poetry of Rossetti, for example) a slightly larger market would have been reached through one of the more 'select' publishing houses. However, the lack of any alternative form of production did not prevent the Pre-Raphaelites from proclaiming the oppositional strategy of their artistic project. The early editions of *The Germ* are rich in fulminations against the moribund or atrophied state of contemporary institutional artistic practice. Here the enemy was the Academy, which was associated with rigid style, trite subject matter and a conservative adherence to 'recipes' for a successful painting. The Pre-Raphaelites stopped well short, however, of drawing any political inferences from their oppositional position. Indeed, they would have regarded any attempt to relate their aesthetic goals to the world of political concern as a departure from the spirituality of their concept of culture.

4.2.3 The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the selective definition of culture

This brings us to the second question posed above - to what extent do the artistic theory and practice of the Pre-Raphaelite movement reflect the selective definition of culture that emerged during the same period? Although the Pre-Raphaelites never addressed themselves directly to abstract questions about the nature of culture, it is clear that in terms of their artistic practice, and of the aesthetic rationale upon which this was founded, they shared many of the assumptions about culture articulated in the writings of the Romantics. Edward Burne-Jones, one of the leading Pre-Raphaelites, was quoted as saying that the more locomotives they (meaning the industrialists of Britain) created the more he would paint the pictures of angels (cited in Stanford, 1973, p.xxvi). The subject matter chosen by the Pre-Raphaelites bears out this concern for other-worldly past. The titles of the paintings submitted for the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1849 included the following - Hunt's 'Rienzi swearing revenge over his brother's grave', Millais's 'Lorenzo at the house of Isabella', and Rossetti's 'Girlhood of the Virgin Mary'. Like the Romantics thirty to forty years before them, the Pre-Raphaelites offered an idealised world of sentiment and pathos as the alternative both to more academic styles of painting dominant at the time and to the threatening materialist values of industrial Britain. But it was offered to a minority, who could afford to purchase the paintings submitted at these exhibitions. For we see in the artistic activity of Pre-Raphaelites a strange contradiction

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between, on the one hand, an idealistic aesthetic founded on belief in universal 'imagination', 'sentiment', 'powerful feelings', and, on the other, an artistic practice linked, through small publishers and private exhibitions, to a restricted market catering for minority tastes. It is a paradox that characterises, as Spender's quotation suggested, most nineteenth-century cultural formations working within the set of assumptions about art that characterise the Romantic tradition. It was a tradition that reached its peak in the studied bohemianism of Oscar Wilde and his circle at the end of the century, by which time totally new forms of cultural production had begun to make their presence felt.

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TUTORIAL ONE

The aims of this first tutorial activity are:

1. To help clarify any issues raised in the course about which you may still be unsure.

2. To provide further practice in identifying cultural formations. To do this we will look at an extended description of the artistic movement known as Impressionism, and break it down into its component parts using Williams's categories of cultural formation.

You need bring with you only your study guide and readings.

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Read Harold Osborne, 'Impressionism' (excerpt), reading 9 before attending the tutorial. If you are unable or do not wish to attend, please study the reading and complete the following SAQ.

****

SAQ 10

1. From the information supplied to you in the reading, how would you describe the internal organisation of the Impressionists?

2. What kind of picture of the external relations of the Impressionist formation emerges from the reading?

3. What further information would you require about the Impressionist formation in order to arrive at a complete picture of their internal organisation and external relations?

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5 CULTURAL CHANGES, 1870-1914

We have seen so far that a concept of culture emerged in Britain during the nineteenth century against the background of a series of social and economic changes known as the Industrial Revolution. We have also seen that the kind of culture produced during this period often sought either to criticise or, by constructing an idealised alternative world, to resist these changes. By the end of that century, however, certain artists were coming to respond to their environment in a radically different way, and it is their new responses and the type of culture they produced that now warrants our attention. Above all, it involved rejection of the idealised, other-worldly notions of the Romantics.

The next reading describes some of the major social changes that took place during the period 1870 to 1914, and specifies the ways that they affected artists and writers. The reading is taken from Malcolm Bradbury's *The Social Context of Modern English Literature*. In reading 10, Bradbury considers (in general terms) the transition from the relatively secure intellectual and cultural world of Victorian Britain to a modern period which, according to Bradbury, was characterised by a painful awareness of transformations in the moral, political and intellectual life of the nation.

Bradbury is correct in identifying this period as one of transition, although he is remiss for not drawing our attention to many of the more radical changes, such as the development of labour movements in Britain, France and Germany, and the loss of industrial dominance by Great Britain (to say nothing of the 'sexual revolution' initiated in part by the writings of Freud). As a pen sketch of this period, Bradbury's account is, however, useful, for it draws our attention to most of the major social issues that impinged upon the writers and artists of the period.

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Read Malcolm Bradbury, 'English culture 1870-1914' (excerpts), reading 10.

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SAQ 11

1. Briefly identify the general features of Victorian culture as defined by Bradbury (pp. 2-4).

2. Note down:

   (a) the way in which Bradbury characterises the new culture that began to emerge after 1870;

   (b) the examples of the new culture identified by Bradbury.

5.1 Culture and society, 1870-1914

In the preceding reading, Malcolm Bradbury argued that during the period between 1870 and 1914 important developments in culture were brought about by changes in English society. In that reading, Bradbury concentrated upon certain subjective responses to these cultural and social changes, pointing out how a feeling of crisis and instability began to appear in the pronouncements of certain writers and artists.

In a later chapter in his book, *The Social Context of Modern English Literature*, Bradbury goes into greater detail in explaining just what those social changes were and why they were important.

Bradbury identifies two broad processes of social change: urbanisation and mechanisation. The first process will be familiar to you from our earlier discussion (in section 3) of the Romantics and their criticisms of the Industrial Revolution. You'll remember that certain Romantic authors - such as Wordsworth and Blake - felt that the migration from country to town that occurred towards the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century meant both a loss of traditional values and an increase in physical degradation, particularly for those workers involved in the harsh world of factory life.

By the end of the nineteenth century, many of the material hardships of city life had been dealt with through a series of factory reforms (reducing, for example, the working day) and municipal laws (improving, for example, general sanitations facilities in large cities). But certain facts of city life still remained, and indeed became intensified during this period. Bradbury draws our attention to the increasing agglomeration and centralisation of society. '... [T]he nation as a whole was shrinking ...' (Bradbury, 1971, p.45). More and more people were coming to live in London thus reinforcing the political and economic importance of the capital. Writers and artists were also coming to live in London; they became, according to

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Bradbury, 'urbanized intellectuals', free from any allegiance to traditional values or traditional artistic practices. Some artists, such as the poet Rupert Brookes, of course, bemoaned this state of affairs, and argued in their work for continuity and tradition. Other writers, however, such as T.S. Eliot and James Joyce, welcomed the cosmopolitan and liberal environment of the city, and responded in their work accordingly. We give the name 'Modernist' to such writers.

These Modernist writers and artists also engaged with the second aspect of social life that Bradbury isolated for discussion: mechanisation. Technological innovation was accelerating during this period. Among the many innovations we might mention the motor car, the wireless, the first aeroplanes and electric light. For many artists, the advent of this new technology gave a great impetus to traditional artistic practices - such as painting - and made possible the development of whole new cultural forms, such as the cinema. This brings us to our next reading, where Bradbury returns to the cultural sphere to outline in greater detail the relationship between these social changes and the new cultural forms they made possible.

5.2 Technology and cultural change: the publishing industry 1870-1950

In the second reading from *The Social Context of Modern English Literature* (reading 11) Bradbury takes a detailed look at how one particular organisation in the field of contemporary culture - the publishing industry - altered under the pressure of the major social changes outlined in the preceding readings. Bradbury, in fact, goes well beyond the period 1870-1914, and comes right up to date to discuss such phenomena as the 'paperback' and the 'best-seller'.

In his discussion, Bradbury has two central concerns:

(a) He outlines a history of the publishing industry in the twentieth century, specifying its implications for the role of the writer and his or her developing public. In presenting this outline, Bradbury is primarily concerned with the social and economic dimensions of cultural production (at least as far as the activity of creating literary texts is concerned). Bradbury substantiates his analysis with a good deal of technical data (the number and price of books sold, the market response and the percentage bought by libraries as opposed to private buyers). In his account, Bradbury lays the basis for a significant expansion of our earlier categories of cultural formation. In the next section, we will return to his findings, and with the help of readings taken from a work by the French literary sociologist, Robert Escarpit, we will try to work Bradbury's historical account into a <u>model</u> of cultural production. By 'model' we mean a general scheme or diagram which allows us to

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describe different forms of cultural production according to a standard pattern. One important advantage of such a model is that it allows comparisons to be drawn between different historical situations; another is that it allows a theory of cultural production to be developed, rather than assuming that there are simply an indefinite number of different individual works of literature about which no generalisations can be made. However, the major value of the model of cultural production that we shall develop through the course is that it allows us to get a sense of the several factors and processes that make up the work of cultural production in a modern Western society.

(b) Bradbury's second major concern presents us with rather different problems. In his exposition, Bradbury moves from an analysis of the history of writing and of publishing in the early years of the twentieth century to certain judgements on the value of the work produced during this period. This move in his argument is clear as early as p.2, reading 11 where he quotes the literary critic, Edmund Gosse (1849-1928) regretting the decline in literary standards brought about by the recent expansion of the reading public. Bradbury is signalling here the beginnings of the debate about the supposed threat posed by 'mass' or 'popular' culture to the existence of so-called 'high' culture. This 'threat', about which so much noise has been made since the 1930s that you will certainly be familiar with the terms in which it is debated, continues to arouse controversy in detail in section 8. At this point it is sufficient that you make yourself completely familiar with the way the debate between literary and popular culture is presented in reading 11. You might also recall the passage that you read in the preceding course, HP03b, *Authorship*, from Queenie Leavis, *Fiction and the Reading Public* (reading 12).

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Read Malcolm Bradbury, 'The institutions of literary culture', reading 11, and complete the SAQ on the next page.

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SAQ 12

1. List the factors that Bradbury indentifies as having contributed to the increase in publishing activity towards the end of the nineteenth century. See pp.1-2.

2. Why, according to Bradbury, was the work of the 'serious' writer appreciated only by a minority in this period? See pp.2-3.

3. What, according to Q.D. Leavis, led to a 'standardization of taste' in literature during this period? See pp.5-6.

4. Briefly outline how the publishing industry has developed over the last 25 years. See pp.6-8.

5. How has the social and educational composition of the reading public changed during the same period? See pp.8-9.

6. In one hundred words, indicate what effect the paperback 'revolution' has had on contemporary publishing and reading habits. See pp.9-12.

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6 CULTURAL PRODUCTION

In delineating a history of writing and publishing over the period 1870 to 1950, Bradbury at one stage talks of the 'essential circle of contact' between writer and reader. What he means by that is the process of literary communication that takes place through a number of forms, procedures and channels, which influence and condition the individual act of literary creation. One obvious channel considered by Bradbury is the process of publication; technological changes in this process often exert a determining influence on the type of work produced. (You'll remember how Bradbury talks about the demise of the 'triple decker' novel of the nineteenth century and the rise of the more 'manageable' paperback of modern times.) The major components of this circle of contact can be easily illustrated as follows:

Model 1

Writer------→ Publisher------→ Public

This is a very simple diagram, but we will add to it as we go along. Nevertheless, for all its simplicity, this model directs our attention to its individual components, starting with the figure of the writer. For the moment, we shall take 'writer' to refer solely to literary authors. After we have constructed the model in its entirety, we will consider to what extent other cultural producers, such as painters or composers of music, can be located within it.

What questions can we ask about the individual writer in his or her role as cultural producer? We have already seen in our earlier discussion of cultural formation that artists produce their art within a complex context; to speak purely of 'inspiration', 'creativity' or 'imagination' (as you saw in the preceding course this is precisely what Romantic writers such as Shelley or Coleridge did) is to offer a misleadingly simplified view of the process of artistic production. Our concern with cultural formation did not, however, take us into the social dimension of that process, since at that stage in our exposition we were largely interested in the organisational and institutional framework in which formations exist. We must now expand that framework.

6.1 The author

In the next reading, Diana Laurenson provides us with a sociological view of authorship. Some of the points she makes will by now be familiar to you from your study of the previous course, as well as from Bradbury's observations on the changes in the publishing industry over the past one hundred years. Laurenson classifies individual authors according to their social background. In doing this, she goes beyond the two categories already identified, namely large-scale economic conditions and small group associations or formations, to bring the 'life-data' of individuals into the

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scope of the analysis. However, although she opens discussion up to the question of the individual as literary producer, Laurenson's work conflicts with the Romantic view of the author (as outlined in section 3.2) by its insistence on literature as a profession.

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Read Diana Laurenson, 'A sociological study of authorship' (excerpt), reading 12.

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SAQ 13

1. What are the 'life-data' that Laurenson selects as relevant in describing the social background of the author?

2. What social background do most writers come from?

3. What other professional commitments have authors traditionally followed?

Armed with the sociological information that Laurenson provides on the social background and professional commitments of the writers in her study (together with the historical information on authorship provided in the previous course), you will begin to recognise just how limited and selective is that form of literary study that treats works of literature solely in terms of an individual author's imagination and experience, as if the production of a work could adequately be traced back to these factors alone. What you are seeing with Laurenson and other similar analyses is the emergence of the new discipline of Cultural Studies, a discipline that draws on sociological knowledge and description, rather than on the various combinations of aesthetic, moral and psychological notions that have predominated in the literary field in the last one hundred years. It is not a case of deciding that this newer analysis is better or worse than the older one; rather, at this stage, the idea is to recognise the new alignment of literary study with a sociology that has its particular terms and objects of study ('life-data', 'social background', 'professionalisation', etc.). One consequence of this new alignment is precisely the possibility of investigating a new object - the cultural formation - which was not a matter of concern for a literary criticism based on aesthetic, moral and psychological foundations.

Where the particular matter of the 'author' is concerned, therefore, it is worth noting how the terms of an analysis such as Laurenson's shift our attention away from

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the imagination, belief and individual psyche of an author; instead we begin to look at the objects that are knowable within a sociology: class and social background, commercial, contractual and professional commitments, and organisations in which writers work.

6.2 The publisher

In the next reading, we consider the role of the publisher in the process of cultural production. The reading is taken from a work by the French sociologist, Robert Escarpit, *The Sociology of Literature*. The central theme of Escarpit's reading is that the publisher is something more than just a middle-man, simply passing the finished literary product onto the public. The publisher is also instrumental in determining what kind of work is created, since if the writer insists upon producing inappropriate material the publisher will have difficulty in disposing of it. Thus, professional writing is absolutely caught up in commercial and contractual relations which, in some instances, can exert enormous influence on the decisions which shape the work. In other words, the role of the publisher highlights the economic rationale involved in the business of cultural production. In reading the passage, bear in mind that whilst Escarpit refers on the whole to 'publisher' in the singular, most modern publishers are in fact publishing houses, consisting of a large number of people - a board of directors, stockholders, readers, editors and the work force engaged in printing the material. Nevertheless, Escarpit is right in asserting that the choice of material for publication often lies with an individual editor or director. The reading is fairly dense, and you will have to study it carefully. Escarpit's examples are drawn from the context of French cultural production, but this should not prove a problem. Note how he treats 'publication' precisely as an operation of making something public, whilst publishing is treated very much in sociological terms as related to the emergence of a middle class.

****

Read Robert Escarpit, 'The art of publication', reading 13, and complete the SAQ on the next page.

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SAQ 14

1. Briefly list the three main functions attributed by Escarpit to the publisher. See p.3.

2. According to Escarpit, how does a publisher 'create' a public? See p.4

3. How does a publisher reach his public? See pp.5-6.

6.3 The role of the public

As you will have gathered from reading 13, the kind of literature a publisher chooses to publish, how many copies he prints of a certain work, the amount he charges for it, how the finished product is advertised, all depend upon his perception of the preferences of his public. In terms of the economic viability of the publishing process, understanding the process of manipulating the public is all-important. But what exactly is 'the public'? In one sense, the answer is obvious - the public is simply the collective name we give to people who buy and read the works of literature published in any one community. Were we to analyse this public, we could use the same system of classification used to analyse the social background of writers, i.e., educational, geographical, ethnic, religious, professional and family characteristics. By applying standard statistical techniques, we could then ascertain how many people from a certain social background consume particular kinds of literature. From the point of view of the economics of publishing, the data that such techniques produce are important in making sure that the right kind of product gets to the right kind of consumer.

However, things are not so simple as this scheme might suggest. For example, the Australian book market is not one in which an Australian public is surveyed as to its preferences as a consumer of published books, this survey information then going to an Australian publisher who contracts writers to produce those books that the public wishes to read. As you might know, the Australian book market is very much caught up in the international publishing monopoly system whereby British publishers have had preferential access to Australia, sometimes deciding to make a profit here by artificial high-pricing policies which could be maintained because American publishers (offering the same title but in a cheaper American edition) were unable to gain access to the market.

There is, however, another sense in which the public helps determine what kind of literature sees the light of day, but this has less to do with the actual public that might read that literature than with the public that the

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writer imagines he or she is writing for. Because this public only exists in the mind of the author, it cannot be approached with the empirical methods of statistical analysis used to assess the first type of public. This imaginary public consists of a series of authorial expectations about the political, moral and religious values and beliefs of the kind of people who will read the work. To ascertain what these expectations are we must go back to the author and his or her writings, both actual literary works, and also the more circumstantial pronouncements about the world in general.

In spite of the methodological difficulties involved in trying to classify this second kind of public (we could call it an 'intentional' public to distinguish it from the 'empirical' public measured by sociological investigations), Laurenson has made a useful attempt in the following excerpt from her article 'A sociological study of authorship'. In this reading, she talks about 'institutionalized' and 'individualized' writers, i.e., those writers who, by and large, accept or conform to social expectations and those who do not accept, or even deliberately flaunt, such expectations. She admits that these categories are not hard and fast, but are rather 'ideal-types'. What she means by this is that the two categories represent pure examples of contrasting authorial attitudes - the two furthest points on a spectrum that would, in its middle, include authors who would follow both institutional and individual principles in equal measures. You'll also notice that Laurenson begins her discussion with a brief reference to the partial and limited view of artistic creation that the Romantics believed in.

****

Read Diana Laurenson, 'Institutionalized and individualized writers' (excerpt), reading 14.

****

SAQ 15

1. What is the 'demand situation' and what effect did it have on the writing of literature in the nineteenth century? See pp.1-2.

2. Suggest five ways in which the writing of the 'individualized' author differs from that of the 'institutionalized'? See pp.2-4.

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6.4 The 'gatekeepers'

Let us return to our discussion of the public. The statistical method of analysing the public not only leaves the value-laden world of individual authorial expectations unexplored, it also neglects to distinguish between the different degrees of influence exercised by the individual members of the reading public. In fact, the question of how works of literature circulate in the private world of personal recommendation or criticism has, on the whole, resisted sociological enquiry. There are, however, certain institutional roles that individuals can perform, and these are more accessible to scrutiny and assessment. Among these roles we can include book reviewers, censors, literary critics, teachers, distributors and public librarians. They are sometimes brought together under the general heading of 'gatekeepers'. As that metaphor suggests, readers who perform the role of gatekeepers keep a check on the literary 'traffic' or 'trade' between writer and public. Like publishing, they have an important mediating function. In the next reading, taken from John Hall's recent book *The Sociology of Literature*, four of these mediating institutions - censorship, criticism, distribution and public libraries - are examined in some detail from an historical perspective.

****

Read John Hall, 'Censors, critics, distributors and public libraries' (excerpts), reading 15.

****

SAQ 16

1. Quickly identify the facets of private and social life that censors normally concern themselves with. (Hall calls them 'skeletons in the cupboard', p.1.)

2. Describe briefly, in your own words, the three major periods of British literary criticism. What are the modern trends in literary criticism?

3. In a couple of paragraphs, show why the rise of the book club is important for the modern publishing market. See pp.15-17.

4. From the figures on p.18, what can you say about the composition of the group of people who use libraries? Briefly speculate on the implications of this for the dissemination of a literary culture.

As in the previous subsections dealing with the categories of author (6.1), publisher (6.2) and public (6.3), our

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discussion of the gatekeepers of cultural production could certainly be expanded beyond the fairly narrow limits we have imposed. For example, you might recognise that literary critics play the role of guides and gatekeepers for some categories of literature more than others (books selected at airport bookstands are probably chosen more because of a striking cover design than as a result of advice from a literary critic). However, it is also possible to speculate on the transformation of literary criticism itself under the impact of sociological knowledge of the sort we have been discussing and reading. The evident implication here is that if critics were all trained sociologists, book reviews and literary studies would be very different from the form in which they currently exist.

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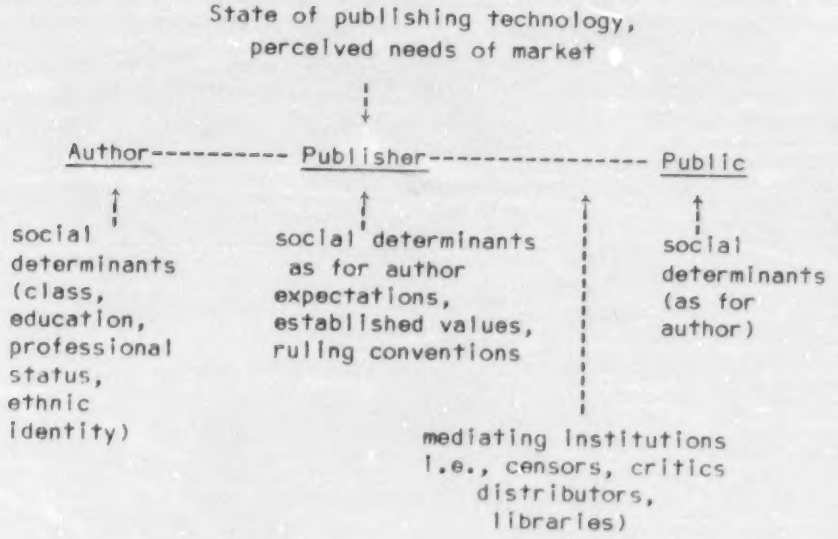
7 A MODEL OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION

At the beginning of the last section, a rudimentary model of cultural production was proposed. The model was restricted to just three terms:

Author------→ Publisher------→ Public

We are now in a position to augment the model by incorporating the elements discussed in section 6, with the result that the model can be redrawn as follows:

Model 2


State of publishing technology,
perceived needs of market
Author
Publisher
Public
social determinants (class, education, professional status, ethnic identity)
social determinants as for author expectations, established values, ruling conventions
social determinants (as for author)
mediating institutions i.e., censors, critics distributors, libraries)

This model is related in particular to literary production. How do other forms of cultural production relate to this model? Let us return to the world of fine arts and of painting. Substituting the painter for the author, we can see that the painter too creates art within a social context, aware of the market (however small and select) for whom he or she is painting. Of course, painters do not publish their work in the way that authors do; they are, nevertheless, dependent upon their particular gatekeepers' mediating institutions, like art galleries and exhibitions, without which the public would never be reached. And, like authors, painters are also dependent upon critics and reviewers to act as catalysts in creating a favourable reputation or fashion.

Much the same could be said about the composer of music. In this case, we need again to change the mediating term, and for publisher substitute record company or media network like the ABC, that is, agencies which accommodate non-literary forms of cultural production within our model; the exact nature of the components of that model may change, but their general interrelations remain much the same.

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back to section 4.1 on cultural formations and read it in the light of our discussion of cultural production, you will notice several things about the former:

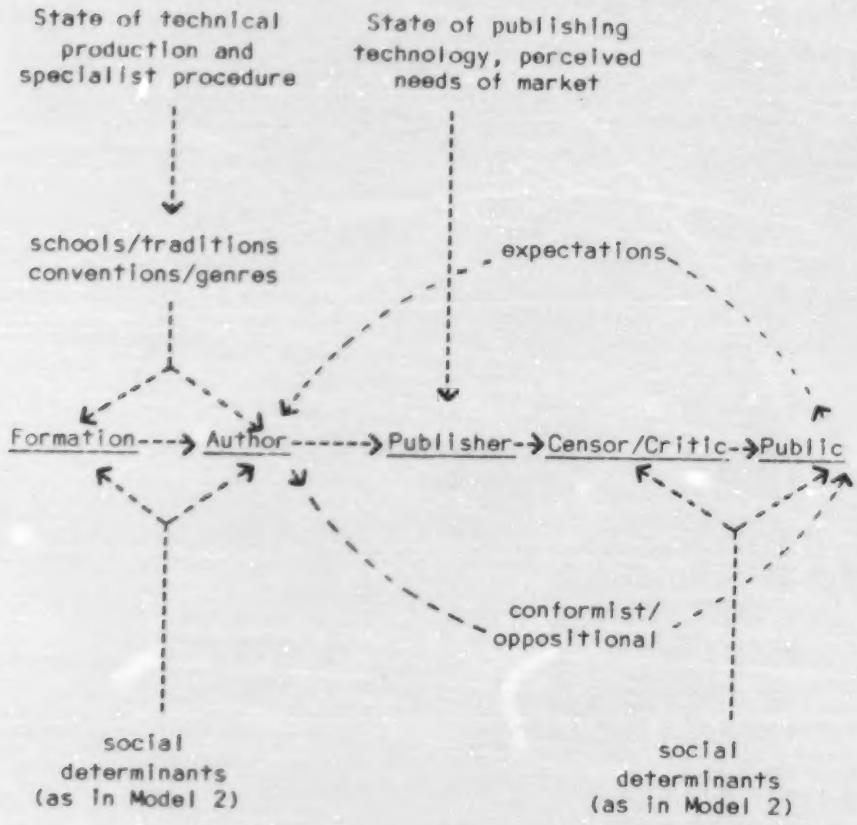
(a) There is a concentration upon the productive as opposed to the mediational or receptive aspects of the process of cultural formation.

(b) On the whole, the social determinants of cultural formations are not specified.

(c) There are certain overlaps between the two accounts, for example, in their emphasis upon the oppositional strategies of certain cultural practices.

Let us now add the categories of cultural formation to our scheme of cultural production and thereby arrive at the third model of cultural production:

Model 3



What are the new components that we have added to Model 2? On the horizontal axis, we have added the earlier concept of formation. This is important because it is often an author's or an artist's membership or an allegiance to a particular cultural formation that provides him or her with

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the necessary framework in which to produce art. What this framework consists of and how it functions with respect to the individual author has been largely explained to you in our earlier discussion of the different types of cultural formation.

On the same horizontal axis, we have also added to this model the component of censors and critics. As the diagram makes clear, these individuals (who often represent academic or political institutions) act as filters, not only making sure that the right publication reaches the right market, but also often critically assessing the value of that publication. There will be further discussion of the role of the critic in Course HP04b, *Literary Studies*.

Above the horizontal axis, we have added the other determining factor of the development of cultural formations, the purely technical one of the effect of the state of mechanical production on the creation of art. This is a dimension that Raymond Williams mentioned in his analysis of the specialising role of certain cultural formations (see section 4.1.2), and one that Malcolm Bradbury lay great stress upon in his discussion of the relationship between society and culture in the twentieth century (see section 5). The important point to emerge from both discussions is that technology not only makes possible new art forms (such as the invention of the camera made possible photography), it can also transform traditional art forms (in the way that the expansion of the publishing industry through the paperback revolution has influenced the tastes and procedures of modern novelists).

Under the axis, we have added the important dimension of the author's attitude to society and his or her public which, crudely put, can be identified as either conformist or oppositional. The full range of attitudes that these broad terms include can be examined in reading 12 from Diana Laurenson.

Summary

Before concluding this section and resuming our analysis of the debate about culture, it is necessary to ask ourselves just what use these models of cultural production are. In the introduction to this course, we said that the new discipline of cultural studies looked beyond the traditional emphasis upon the individual artist or writer in explaining the production of culture in society. By developing our models of cultural production we have laid the basis for a systematic understanding both of the role of culture in society and of the dynamics by which an individual piece of culture comes into existence. In future courses you will be able to use these models in analysing specific cultural products. Supposing, for example, you were confronted by a literary text to analyse in terms of its status as a cultural product. Where would you begin? As a minimum of information, you would have the title of the work and the name of the author. You would, therefore, be able to start

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from the second component in Model 3, the author, and either work backwards and ask yourself such questions as 'Was he or she a member of a particular school or literary movement?', and 'Did the author share certain assumptions and conventions with other authors?', 'Did he/she produce a manifesto or other theoretical writing?'; or, alternatively, you could work forwards, asking yourself such questions as 'Who published the author's work?', 'Was the work successful? (did it sell well?)', 'How was the work received?', 'Did it receive positive or negative reviews?'.

After exhausting all the possible concepts on the horizontal axis, you would then ask yourself such questions as 'What technical means did the author use to produce the work?' (was it, for example, a privately circulated manuscript or a mass-produced book?); or, if the producer concerned is a pictorial artist, 'Did the production of the work require a new sort of technology?' (this would be particularly relevant to a photographer, sculptor or film-maker). Then other, perhaps longer, questions need to be answered: 'What kind of background did the author come from?' 'Did he or she adopt a conformist or oppositional attitude towards society?' 'How did the author perceive the expectations of his/her readership?'

You would, of course, have to have a good deal of contextual or circumstantial information to answer such questions, but at least you would know what kind of material you are looking for in order to analyse the production of a work of culture.

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TUTORIAL TWO

The aims of this second tutorial activity are:

1. To help clarify any difficulties or confusion that may have arisen from the study guide or the accompanying readings.

2. To develop skills in analysing cultural production. To do this we will look in detail at the socio-economic conditions under which Hollywood films are produced for the British market.

You need only bring your study guide and readings with you.

****

Read Herbert Gans, 'Hollywood films on British screens', reading 16 before attending the tutorial. If you are unable or do not wish to attend Tutorial Two, please study that reading and complete the following SAQ.

****

SAQ 17

Using the model of cultural production developed in section 7 (Model 3), answer in not more than two or three sentences the following questions:

1. What are the economic reasons for the success of American films in Britain?

2. What market factors have made possible this success?

3. What, according to Gans, are the values mediated by the average Hollywood film?

4. What socio-economic changes lie behind the changes in the market for films in Britain?

5. Why have British producers been unable to take advantage of this new market?

6. Why does Gans think that the dominance of Hollywood in Britain is on the wane?

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8 THE DEBATE ABOUT 'MASS' CULTURE

We have already touched on the belief that in the conditions of modern societies high culture is somehow under threat from popular or mass culture (section 5.1). Since then, we have begun to develop in some detail a model for describing the systems of cultural production within which the modern artist works. The forms of modern artistic production are bound up with new social conditions such as urbanisation, mechanisation and political democratisation that have emerged since the late nineteenth century. It is against the background of these social conditions that the nature of culture itself has been proclaimed by some and reassessed by others.

We saw earlier how Bradbury proposed that certain artists and critics were coming to feel that the new market for literature was producing a flood of 'cheap', 'popular' works, which, in their 'sensationalism' and their pandering to the lowest possible tastes, were unworthy of the name of culture. This feeling, which has become centred on an opposition of 'high' culture versus 'mass' culture, now warrants our attention.

The debate was underway well before the beginning of this century. As Leo Lowenthal points out in *Literature, Popular Culture and Society*, concern about the effects of 'popular' literature on the moral standards of the people has been voiced since ancient times (Lowenthal, 1961, pp.2-3). It is, however, only in this century that popular literature has come to be seen not only as a challenge to the continuing existence of high culture, but as a threat to the survival of the community in general. At least it was in such dramatic terms that one of the most vociferous opponents of mass culture, the English critic, F.R. Leavis (1895-1978), launched his offensive back in the 1930s.

> The great agent of change, and, from our point of view, destruction, has of course been the machine - applied power. The machine has brought us many advantages, but it has destroyed the old ways of life, the old forms, and by reason of the continual rapid change it involves, prevented the growth of new ones. Moreover, the advantage it brings us in mass-production has turned out to involve standardization and levelling-down outside the realm of mere material goods. Those who in school are offered (perhaps) the beginnings of education in taste are exposed, out of school, to the competing exploitation of the cheapest emotional responses; films, newspapers, publicity in all forms, commercially-catered fiction - all offer satisfaction at the lowest level, and inculcate the choosing of the most immediate pleasures, got with the least effort (Leavis and Thompson, 1960, p.3; originally published 1933).

Leavis, as lecturer in English at the University of

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Cambridge and editor of the prestigious literary-critical journal, *Scrutiny*, was an influential figure in literary circles from the 1940s to the 1960s.

We can get some idea of Leavis's stance by looking briefly at one of his most notorious and conspicuous entries into the arena of public controversy over culture and social values. In 1962, Leavis published his reply to a 1959 lecture given by the novelist and commentator C.P. Snow, entitled 'The two cultures'. Snow had argued that traditional definitions of culture, centred on the arts, were simply unsuitable for the modern age, which was built upon achievements in science and technology. To prepare students for life in our times, it was therefore the scientific and technical disciplines which should receive greater emphasis in schools and universities.

Leavis replied in a piece called 'Two cultures? The significance of C.P. Snow'. It was a vituperative attack on the person of Snow and his ideas. According to Leavis, by exalting the claims of science to be included in the cultural curriculum, Snow was neglecting the arts' privilege of representing the best in 'human creativity' and 'human significances'. These alone, for Leavis, form the heart of our cultural interests. The real values of human life, he argues, have nothing to do with 'productivity, material standards of living, hygenic and technological progress', but are to be found only in the individual's recovering the 'livingness [sic] of the deepest vital instinct; as intelligence, a power - rooted, strong in experience, and supremely human - of creative response to the new challenges of time' (Leavis, 1962, p.27).

Such arguments are not, of course, unfamiliar in the field of literary criticism, which (as you will see in the next course, HP04b, *Literary Studies*) has traditionally been concerned with the moral role or mission of literature. But it does not make for great discrimination. Largely similar arguments to those advanced against Snow's advocacy of a scientific emphasis in schooling were advanced by Leavis against the supposed encroachment of the feared and corrosive effects of mass culture, even though the latter is precisely a mass phenomenon and, as such, quite distinct from the specialist and technical challenge of a scientific tradition. In other words, whether the adversary is popular culture or the selective tradition of scientific knowledge, the same defence is staged of the aesthetic-moral tradition of English literary culture.

Leavis exerted considerable influence on literary education in Britain, an influence which certainly extended to Australia (as you will see in the following course), particularly at the level of university English studies. It is worth our time, therefore, to look in greater detail at Leavis's theory of culture and at the way in which he applied this theory to an investigation - which, more accurately, could perhaps better be termed a judgement - of a number of developments in contemporary society. We shall

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use, for this purpose, a recent major study of Leavis by R.P. Bilan, *The Literary Criticism of F.R. Leavis* (1979). Although we shall not go into any of the finer points in discussing Leavis's analysis of modern culture, for instance, into his use of metaphors such as the 'health' or 'sickness' of a form of argument, we shall get an idea of the central role accorded by Leavis to literature and the tradition of its major works. Bilan's approach is generally balanced, although in the final analysis his assessment of social implications of Leavis's work is sympathetic rather than critical. Reading 17 is divided into three sections which can be read through together.

****

Read R.P. Bilan, *The Literary Criticism of F.R. Leavis* (excerpts), reading 17.

****

SAQ 18

1. What are those features of seventeenth-century English life that are, according to Leavis, admirable, and that are lacking in the present? The key phrase is on p.8.

2. What importance does the idea of 'the organic community' play in Leavis's thought?

3. What are the main features of 'Technologico-Benthamite Civilization', and what have been its effects on modern culture?

4. Briefly indicate what in your view might be weaknesses in Leavis's cultural theories.

8.1 The 'educated public'

In spite of his critical fulminations against the modern age of technology and mass culture, Leavis never argued that traditional culture could not be created or the values it embodied appreciated in the modern world. He was, however, pessimistic about the extent to which this traditional culture and its values could be disseminated, and devoted a good deal of his writings to locating those areas in society where culture could flourish. The results that he came up with are discussed by R.P. Bilan in another chapter from his book, entitled, significantly, 'The educated public'. This is a useful reading for our purposes, because Bilan discusses Leavis's views on the minority basis of culture within the context of the legacy left by the nineteenth-century debate, particularly by the work of Matthew Arnold.

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Read R.P. Bilan, 'The educated public', reading 18, and complete the following SAQ.

****

SAQ 19

1. Why, according to Leavis, is an educated public so important?

2. How can such a public be fostered in modern society?

3. What criticisms have been levelled at Leavis's ideas?

Summary

The writings of F.R. Leavis represent the most influential argument for the maintenance of the selective definition of culture in the twentieth century. As will be made clear to you in the next course, HP04b, *Literary Studies*, the Leavisite approach to literature and culture has been the major influence on educational and academic thinking in Britain and Australia over the last twenty to thirty years. His importance for this course lies in the fact that he retains many of the concerns about culture that nineteenth-century writers and critics like Matthew Arnold evinced in their work whilst trying to locate those concerns with the changed socio-economic context in the twentieth century. In this sense, his work pre-figures the writings of the members of the Frankfurt School, who were likewise worried about the threat to high culture posed by the rise of so-called 'mass' culture in Western countries. Unlike Leavis, the writers of the Frankfurt School, however, were more aware of the political function of popular culture, seeing in it an attempt by the ruling class in society to manipulate the lives of the populace. It is to the writings of this School that we must now turn.

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9 THE 'FRANKFURT SCHOOL' AND THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

It will have become clear from the above readings that the cultural theories of F.R. Leavis were developed within a set of assumptions about the nature of artistic activity, and about the relationship between artist and public, that were originally formed in the nineteenth century. As the many references by Leavis and his nineteenth-century forerunners to 'values' suggests (however vaguely they may have conceptualised such 'values'), their concern for the preservation and continuity of values was very much a moral concern. It is this that links Leavis's theories with those of Arnold, writing almost a century before him. Both see culture as being, in the broadest terms, 'life-enhancing', an enclave of authenticity in a world debased by materialism. In the final analysis, culture, although created within a society, allows the individual to transcend that society, offering a vantage point from which to assess the ethical integrity of the majority: in short, it provides the individual with 'standards'.

If we locate such views within the model of cultural production that we constructed earlier, we will become aware of the very partial nature of the traditional, selective concept of culture. Leavis neglects to ask himself certain fundamental questions about the social identity of cultural production, such as who is in control of the media of 'mass' culture, and what political purposes are served by such a frame of reference. We shall therefore look at the work of other critics who have commented upon the relationship between 'high' and 'popular' culture in modern society.

One of the major alternatives to Leavis's theories is that represented by the writers associated with the Frankfurt School. This refers to a group of philosophers and social scientists who came together in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s to analyse a number of social and cultural problems. Although predominantly Marxist, this group drew a lot of its theoretical sophistication from other sources of contemporary thought, particularly that of Freud. Their major exponents were Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) and Max Horkheimer (1895-1973). Their relevance to this course lies in the extended critique of 'mass' culture that they offered in a number of articles and books from 1930 onwards, but particularly in the classic essay 'The culture industry: enlightenment as mass deception', first published in 1944. In this essay, Adorno and Horkheimer argue that in modern capitalist society the works of 'popular' culture - Hollywood films, best-selling novels, television serials, hit songs, etc. - have simply become commodities to be marketed in accordance with the profit-maximising laws of supply and demand, production and consumption. Adorno and Horkheimer further argue that this system dictates the content of the individual works; not only are the same roles, situations and themes repeated from one best-selling novel to another, the political message that such works embody (often in a disguised form) preaches an unquestioning obedience to the status quo and to the political order that

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exists behind the culture industry. The views of Adorno and Horkheimer are, of course, controversial, being based upon an interpretation of society which argues that, under monopoly capitalism (an economic system dominated by the influence of large multinational business concerns), the individual is denied the possibility of freedom and self-determination. The general observations of the Frankfurt School concerning the connections between culture and social systems are relevant to our earlier discussions about cultural production. Horkheimer and Adorno come near at times to the ideas of Leavis, particularly in their negative estimation of popular culture. The major difference between the Frankfurt School and Leavis lies in the former's insistence upon the political function of popular literature, its role in transmitting socially conservative norms to its uncritical consumers. These points will be made clear from your study of the next reading, which is taken from Alan Swingewood's book, *The Myth of Mass Culture*. In this book, Swingewood discusses the various accounts of 'mass' culture that have been made over the past fifty years (including Leavis's theories, although we shall pass over that section). Compared to most of our earlier readings, Swingewood's writing is terse and at times rather dense, so you will need to read it carefully and in conjunction with the relevant SAQ, set out below. Early in the reading, Swingewood makes reference to the concept of 'ideology'. This is indeed a key term in the contemporary debate about the political relevance of 'mass' culture, but we will leave a full analysis of the term to the next section.

****

Read Alan Swingewood, 'Mass society as totalitarianism: Mills, Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and the "culture industry"', reading 19.

****

SAQ 20

1. Briefly itemise what, for Swingewood, are the characteristic features of 'mass society'. See p.1.

2. What does Swingewood mean by the term 'culture industry'? See comments in study guide and Swingewood p.2.

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(SAQ 20 continued)

3. Why do Adorno and Horkheimer think the 'collapse of the family' is of such significance? See p.3.

4. Indicate in two summary paragraphs what the theorists of the Frankfurt School recognised as the nature of 'high' culture, and what makes it so different from 'mass' culture? See pp.3-5.

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10 THE CONCEPT OF IDEOLOGY

As will have become clear to you from the last reading and its accompanying study notes, the study of the social production of culture often leads on to questions about its social function. This concern with the social functions of culture is one point that F.R. Leavis and the writers of the Frankfurt School have in common. They are worried about the kinds of values (beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and so on) that some forms of popular culture transmit to people in society. This concern is particularly evident in certain modern writers, like Alan Swingewood or Raymond Williams, but was already implicit in earlier cultural theorists, such as Matthew Arnold, who more optimistically believed that the mass dissemination of high culture would act as a stabilising force at times of great social unrest.

In seeking to identify and explain the social function of culture, many modern theorists have drawn upon the important Marxist concept of 'ideology'. Although there is still much debate within the discipline of cultural studies about the value and meaning of this concept, it is relevant to us in this course because it offers us a way of identifying social and political values actually within cultural products themselves. We will see how this can be achieved in section 10.1, but first let us look at the history of the concept and see how some of its major exponents have interpreted it.

As will be explained to you in the next reading, taken from the British Open University's course on popular culture, the term 'ideology' has a long history. In its original usage, (in France in the late eighteenth century), it referred to the intellectual origins of any system of ideas - philosophical, scientific, ethical, etc. At this stage, the use of the term was quite neutral, devoid of any political connotations. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the term had come, largely through its application to the French Revolution, to acquire the sense of a fanciful or misleading account of the world. This sense was preserved and deepened in the writings of the political philosopher, Karl Marx (1818-1883). The next reading takes up the story from here.

The author of the reading looks at three key stages in the recent history of the concept, concentrating on the writings of Marx, Gramsci and Althusser. His discussion of each of these stages is succinct. Once again, you may find it helpful to approach the reading in conjunction with the relevant SAQ, which will direct your attention to the main ideas contained in that particular section of the reading.

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Read *Popular Culture* (excerpts), reading 20.

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SAQ 21

1. How, according to Marx, does ideology relate to society? See pp.1-2.

2. Give a brief description of Gramsci's concept of 'hegemony'. See p.2.

3. In what ways did Althusser expand the concept of ideology?

Let us summarise some of the above points about the nature of ideology. In doing so we can make use of the writer's idea of a 'sliding scale of meaning' and talk about a 'narrow' or a 'wide' definition of ideology.

The narrow definition of ideology is the 'deterministic' one suggested by the Marxist idea that 'social being determines consciousness'. From this point of view, ideology 'reflects' the political needs of the dominant class in society, the class that owns or controls the means of production (in industry, business and commerce). This class arranges things so that the legal, religious and ethical codes in a society consolidate and legitimise political dominance or 'hegemony' by that class. Since it exists to serve the needs of only one class, ideology thus falsifies, misrepresents or distorts to others the true nature of social processes and historical events. This notion of falsity, misrepresentation or distortion has been retained by some modern Marxists who no longer believe that it is possible to identify a single homogeneous ruling class, but argue rather that ideology transcends social class to become forms of social consciousness within which people from all classes live out their lives.

This is certainly a 'wider' definition of ideology, since it explains how people from different social backgrounds come to hold similar views of the world, as in the case of patriotism during times of war. Writers and philosophers who hold this 'wider' view of ideology tend to concentrate their attention on the functions of social institutions like education, the law, the family or other institutions of the state, seeing in ideology not so much an expression of particular political values and class interests as a concrete means of consolidating and maintaining social attitudes.

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As will be clear from the above remarks, the debate about ideology, what it is and how it works, is complex. Let us ask ourselves the question, then, what is the relevance of the concept of ideology to the field of cultural studies? To answer the question we can return to our earlier model of cultural production. As we saw then, that model is essentially an empirical model. In other words, it describes the objective and quantifiable elements of cultural production - producers, publishers, consumers, critics and censors, and the general market. You will remember from the readings that accompanied the construction of the model that the authors of those readings did not on the whole consider the content of the cultural products (for example, literary texts) under discussion. This is true of readings 13 and 15, by Escarpit and Hall respectively. The exception was Laurenson in reading 14, who added an important dimension to the model when she introduced a discussion of producer's perception of the expectations (both cultural and otherwise) of his or her potential market. It is in this area that the concept of ideology is relevant. The concept of ideology allows us to systematise all the ideational elements (values, beliefs, prejudices, assumptions, etc.) that relate to the process of cultural production. How we systematise these ideational elements will depend, of course, on whether we adhere to the 'narrow' or 'wide' definition of ideology. For example, somebody working within the 'narrow' definition might seek to relate the ideational elements, evident in a literary text or deducible from an author's pronouncements, to his class position, whereas someone working within the 'wider' definition would attempt to relate the same ideational elements to formative social (and socialising) institutions such as the family, school or state.

10.1 Ideology and literature

One problem remains in relating the concept of ideology to cultural studies. This can be summed up in the question - how in practical terms can we identify ideology in a cultural product? Here we can risk a generalisation and say that the more a work of art has an evident social or historical reference point the more applicable the concept of ideology will be to it. It is, thus, easier to talk about the ideology of a literary text or a film than it is about the ideology of a string quartet or a piece of sculpture. This latter type of cultural product (often located under the rubric of the fine arts) should not, however, be granted a privileged status beyond the realm of ideology.

One art critic, John Berger, has recently been engaged in a debate about precisely this question of the ideology of certain fine art products. Since it is often denied that the concept of ideology is applicable to the study of fine arts, it is worthwhile looking at this debate in some detail. John Berger, in his book *Ways of Seeing*, has been discussing the social history of fine arts. He then comes to the subject of the relationship between the painting of

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landscapes and the social or political needs that such paintings would have satisfied. Although he does not use the word ideology, this use of art - to consolidate material interests, such as the ownership of land or property - is precisely what we mean when we talk about the ideology of cultural products. Let us now look at Berger's argument in detail.

****

Read John Berger et. al., *Ways of Seeing* (excerpt), reading 21.

****

As the excerpt from John Berger's book makes clear, it is possible to approach the fine arts in terms of the social function of culture. But the question still remains: How can we identify ideology in a literary text? In the present course, this question can only be answered in a schematic way. There are three ways in which a text can make an ideological statement - (a) explicit political comments, (b) themes and thematic symbolism and (c) form and formal strategy. The first category is a fairly straightforward one. Let us take the case of a novel, for example. Even without knowing anything about its subject matter (whether it is historical or domestic, set in the present or the past, etc.), we can still say that it will have characters and a narrator (however impersonal), who will be capable of making statements about the world, of predisposing the reader to accept certain political values rather than others. If it were a novel about the founding of Israel, such as Leon Uris's *Exodus*, published in 1959, the ideological bias of that novel would be consolidated through political opinions mediated through the narrator and the characters.

Most novels, however, (and Uris's is one of them), avoid overt political statements, preferring to work at the 'deeper' level of themes or symbols traditionally associated with certain values or beliefs. Returning to Uris's *Exodus*, the narrative concentrates upon the struggles of the Jewish people to find a homeland in the Middle East after centuries of persecution in Europe. Uris, on the whole, avoids overt political statement; but the way he presents the hardships and sufferings experienced by the immigrant Jews as they try to build up a life for themselves is deliberately emotive, and draws the reader into identifying with and hence accepting their occupancy of traditional Arab territory. In such cases texts can 'hide' their ideology by displacing the historical subject of the novel (the creation of the state of Israel in the area of Palestine) on to seemingly 'universal' or eternal moral themes, such as the struggle to cultivate nature, the development of romantic attachments, and problems and mysteries of death. In such cases, the reader must ask what <u>function</u> such themes perform in relation to the historical reference point of the novel.

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The form of a text can also be considered ideological. This is a complex issue. Every reader approaches a literary text for the first time with certain expectations derived from reading other works in the same genre. Expectations, for example, about the form of a novel, would centre on traditional configurations of narrative, characterisation, plot, etc. The great majority of the writers of 'popular' literature are careful not to upset or undermine the expectations of their public; once they have hit upon a successful recipe they stick to it. (This is certainly the case with Uris's best-selling novel, which contains little innovation where its form is concerned.) In the case of 'popular' fiction, then, conservative form acts as a prop for the conservative values embodied in the content of the fiction. Because of this, other authors have assumed that if the ideological hegemony of the conservative status quo is to be broken, the very forms of literature must change. This assumption lies behind many twentieth-century avant garde formations such as German Expressionism or French Surrealism. Both of these groups experimented with a wide variety of new formal techniques both in literature and in painting. The Surrealists, for example, tried to shock their 'bourgeois' audience out of their conventional way of looking at the world by constructing a world governed by absurd perspectives and illogical configurations of objects and people.

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TUTORIAL THREE

The aims of this tutorial are:

1. To discuss individual queries about the readings and study guide.

2. To practise using the concept of ideology to identify the social function of literary texts. The text for analysis will consist of excerpts from Leon Uris's *Exodus*. This novel, which was published in the USA in 1959, has as its central theme the founding of the state of Israel in 1947 and the events which led up to it. The author describes these events from a pro-Israeli point of view, and the following questions are intended to draw the reader's attention to the means by which the author achieves his goals.

****

Read Leon Uris, *Exodus* (excerpts), reading 22 before attending the tutorial. If you do not intend to come to Tutorial Three, please study that reading and answer the following questions, keeping in mind our previous discussion about ideology and how it works within a literary text.

****

SAQ 22

1. (a) How does Uris describe Jewish attempts to found their own state? What picture of Arab opposition, and of Arabs in general, emerges from the same description? Consult excerpts 1-4.

   (b) How is the Israeli case for the occupation of Palestine supported by biblical references? See the excerpts included under section 5.

   (b) Why does the narrator see the Palestinian refugees as a self-created Arab problem? See excerpt 6.

2. (a) What values does the kibbutz embody? Consult excerpts 7 and 8.

   (b) In excerpt 10, the kibbutz is described as a 'Garden of Eden'. What other imagery is used in these passages to show the early Israeli settlements in a positive light? See excerpts 9, 10 and 11.

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11 CONCLUSION

This course set out to achieve four main objectives:

1. To investigate how and why the selective definition of culture emerged in the nineteenth century

2. To provide a framework for describing the ways in which cultural groupings come together as formations

3. To examine the social conditions and specific forms of cultural production in modern society

4. To see how cultural products, such as literary texts, are capable of embodying social and political assumptions, which can be identified as ideological.

It was suggested in the introduction to this course that in achieving these objectives we would have to move away from more traditional approaches to culture, which assume the autonomy of the artist, and try to explain cultural production in terms of individual 'inspiration' and 'creativity'. To a large extent, you were prepared for this shift of emphasis by the work you did in Course HP03b, *Authorship*, where the whole Romantic model of cultural and literary creation, and its main terms of reference, were critically examined.

In this course we have gone one step further, and shown how this Romantic model of artistic production is not only theoretically unstable, but simply does not adequately account for the real processes and factors of cultural production in modern society. In establishing what these processes are we have, at the same time, outlined the major tenets or procedures of the recently emerged discipline of cultural studies. This was achieved by developing a number of models of cultural production, culminating in this model. These models are, of course, schematic, and many of their individual components need greater clarification and amplification, but they do provide a basic framework in which individual cultural products can be analysed. The movement away from the Romantic concept of cultural production has also been facilitated by the introduction of the concept of ideology. Not everyone working within the domain of cultural studies would accept that this concept is a viable or coherent one, but most would agree that certain cultural products, such as literary texts, do embody assumptions about the social and political world, assumptions which must be brought to the surface if we are to fully understand how culture can affect the way people think about theories or about the world.

The main themes of this course also have a relevance to the next course, HP04b, *Literary Studies*. That course actually begins by taking up again the notion of a selective definition of culture in the work of F.R. Leavis. It is, however, different in its emphasis upon the central role of institutions, such as secondary or literary criticism, in

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mediating cultural values; indeed, in defining what constitutes 'literature' itself. Course HP04b, *Literary Studies*, also links up with HP04a, *Cultural Formations*, in its stress upon the 'hegemonic' function of literary and cultural institutions, the way such institutions tend to stabilise the status quo by giving the appearance of unity and harmony in cultural matters where, in fact, discord and opposition may be found. The main themes of the course will also be taken up in the courses written for Phase 2 of this part-time programme. In these courses, particularly those written under the rubric of the discipline of 'literary studies', the models developed in this course will allow you to locate individual literary texts within a broad social or political context.

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ANSWERS TO SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

SAQ 1

1. The third *Longman* entry is the closest to the *Fontana* definition of culture.

2. Three of the definitions stress the artistic basis of culture; while the fourth makes reference to the education of the mind.

SAQ 2

1. The concept of culture is associated with mental, intellectual and, particularly, with artistic activities. Purely physical or mechanical activities, such as repairing a car or playing football, would not normally be regarded as 'cultural'.

2. It is implied in these definitions that the enjoyment and appreciation of culture requires a certain amount of leisure time. Furthermore, those people who are involved in professional vocations - such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc. - have a greater feeling for culture, since they are presumably 'better' educated than people involved in purely manual jobs, such as gardening or bricklaying.

SAQ 3

1. The term 'culture' came into existence in the first half of the nineteenth century in the writings of the English Romantics, particularly William Wordsworth.

2. According to Raymond Williams, the concept of culture was developed in response to the social and economic changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution.

SAQ 4

1. For Coleridge and J.S. Mill, the political and economic philosopher Jeremy Bentham symbolised the corruption of the values upon which culture is based (individual standards and tradition are two that are mentioned) and their replacement by the philosophy of utilitarianism which stresses the purely functional.

2. According to Coleridge, the preservers of culture should be a minority, composed of the most educated in the state.

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SAQ 5

1. The Romantics believed that the artist was fundamentally distinguished in kind from other people because of his natural creative genius. It was believed that this genius gave the Romantic artist access to a 'superior reality' (reading 4, p.1) the source of 'universal truths'. Because of this, it was felt that the Romantic artists could by-pass rules and conventions in art and, instead, allow their genius and their imagination to emerge 'spontaneously' through their art.

2. The Romantic poets felt that society was indifferent and even hostile to the kinds of values that they stood for. They felt, consequently, alienated from society, and, from the new middle-class reading public that had come into existence in the eighteenth century, whom they classified as 'philistines'. The Romantics particularly resented their dependence upon the market of commercial publishing, which had come to replace the older institution of private patronage.

3. The distinction between the 'cultivated', a minority capable of appreciating culture, and the 'uncultivated', the broader mass of people supposedly incapable of appreciating culture, arose in the nineteenth century as a response to the expansion of the reading public and a concomitant stress upon the commercial nature of the publishing industry.

SAQ 6

1. Coleridge felt that the transmission of culture in society should be the duty of the 'Clerisy, or national Church' (reading 5, p.1). This group would comprise 'the learned of all denominations; the sages and professors of ... all the so-called liberal arts and sciences'.

2. It was felt that Working Men's Associations favoured a type of education of a 'mechanical nature', where greater emphasis was laid upon the acquisition of scientific and technical knowledge rather than upon the appreciation of culture.

SAQ 7

1. On a political level, Connell draws our attention to the importance of the 1867 Reform Act, which was an attempt to placate the growing unrest evinced by a part of the British population of the time. He points out that Reform Act set off a long train of other reforms in laws, public health and education.

   This was also a period that saw the rise of the professional middle class in Britain. With the rise of that class a new series of recreational activities and pastimes - such as sport - appeared.

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Finally, Connell points out that Britain was beginning to lose its dominance in the European market, a fact which forced it to look further afield to potential buyers of its wares. It is from this period - the mid-1860s - that the ethos of imperialism took a firm hold on British foreign policy.

All of these political, social and economic changes gave the impression that Britain was becoming a materialistic and fragmented society, out of touch with its traditional cultural heritage. Arnold's concept of culture was offered as a remedy to the perceived 'anarchy' of his times.

2. The three main components of Arnold's concept of culture are:

   (a) Its aspiration towards total perfection. Arnold argued that when we assimilate culture we are assimilating 'the best which has been thought and said in the world'. Culture provides us with values and standards with which we can evaluate all our experience of the world.

   (b) Its identity as an activity rather than a 'mere body of knowledge'. Becoming cultured is not simply a question of gaining certain facts or pieces of knowledge, but of slowly acquiring the right views on life, and applying these views in our day-to-day situations. Culture thus becomes a form of personal ethics.

   (c) Its use as an instrument of social amelioration. Arnold saw his society as being fragmented and ridden with social and economic differences. He was scathing of all sections of society which he divided up into 'Barbarians' (the aristocracy), 'Philistines' (the middle classes), and the 'Populace' (the masses as a whole). Arnold believed that the only way social harmony could be restored was through social acceptance of general intellectual and spiritual norms which constitute the heart of culture.

SAQ 8

The Romantics stressed the role of the individual artist in the production of art. The artist was both socially and generically distinct from his fellow men and women, creating art out of his poetic genius, using the divine inspiration of his imagination to produce original works of art.

This is a very partial view of the process of artistic production. As Williams points out, most artists prior to the Romantics worked within the context of guilds, academies or other professional societies. Moreover, they worked according to specific rules and conventions, which limit and

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define the possibilities of the kind of creative act advocated by the Romantics.

SAQ 9

In order to identify the internal organisation of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, we would need to know the following kinds of information:

(a) Whether there was any formal membership of the formation. We would need to answer such questions as, 'How did the individual artists join such formations?' 'Were they elected or was membership open to all?' 'Was there any formal leadership?' 'Was there any adjudicating committee?'

(b) Were the members of this movement organised around any collective public manifestation? Did they organise exhibitions, or publish journals or periodicals? Did they produce a manifesto outlining their artistic aims?

(c) Finally, we must try to ascertain whether the movement evinced any conscious association or group identification. Even if there was no formal membership or collective public manifestation, we must still ask whether the individual members of the group followed any common procedures in producing their art; whether, for example, they adopted a similar style.

SAQ 10

1. Using the categories of internal organisation outlined by Raymond Williams, we can make the following points about the cultural formation known as the Impressionists:

   (a) They lacked any formal membership. They did not possess any rigid hierarchical structure. They did not elect members, nor did they have a president or any other recognised leader.

   (b) According to the article, the Impressionists 'banded together for the purpose of exhibiting'. They were, thus, organised around some collective public manifestation. The article goes on to specify details of that manifestation.

   (c) The Impressionists also evinced a conscious association or group identification. In spite of divergent individual artistic tastes and proclivities, they nevertheless held certain stylistic attitudes in common. Once again, the article specifies what those attitudes are: the recording of immediate experience and of the transitory appearance of objects; the suppression of clear outlines in favour of vaguer tonalities; the exploitation of nuances of light, etc.

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2. In terms of the external relations of the Impressionists, the following points become clear from the article:

   (a) The Impressionists worked within a traditional artistic medium, that of oil painting. They did not experiment with new media.

   (b) On the other hand, they were not a conventional artistic formation, in the sense that they used alternative contexts in which to create and exhibit their work. The Impressionists were not accepted into normal artistic circles, but were forced to turn to minority outlets to exhibit their work. The article points out that the market for Impressionist art was limited, and that, on the whole, their paintings were received 'with bewilderment or suspicion'.

   (c) In purely artistic terms, we can say that the Impressionist school was oppositional. It opposed the dominant styles of the day, and the conventional outlets for artistic work (the academies, big galleries, etc.). However, this opposition did not pose any real threat to the art world of late nineteenth-century France, and the article ends by describing how Impressionist work has slowly become assimilated into the repertoire of accepted art. In the final analysis, the Impressionists had little sense of the political importance of the artistic vocation, and had little interest in changing the social norms upon which conventional culture was based.

3. Within the confines of a short encyclopaedic entry, the article provides us with sufficient information to describe both the internal organisation and external relations of the Impressionist school. A fuller picture of the internal organisation would have been possible had we been given information about how the individual members had originally become associated, and whether they had formulated any clear intention for their artistic activity.

   As regards their external relations, more information about the reasons for their alienation from the conventional contexts of exhibition, and about the actual sales of their pictures (who bought them and why) would have been useful.

SAQ 11

1. The central features of Victorian culture were its relative homogeneity and stability compared with the culture that was to emerge after 1870. According to Bradbury, the artists of this period, even when critical of society - as the Romantics were - nevertheless felt

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that they had a role to play in changing society. After all, the whole debate about culture, which developed during the course of the nineteenth century, had as its ultimate goal the amelioration of society.

2. In contrast to Victorian culture, the new culture that emerged after 1870, according to Bradbury, revealed a number of problems. A greater awareness of the uncertainty of life becomes apparent in this period, and with it a loss of confidence in traditional culture. Artists and writers begin to look for new values, but these new values are introspective ones, founded on an examination of their inner lives. Consciousness rather than society constitutes the focal point for this 'Modernist' sensibility. Consequently, the metaphors of this new culture are dynamic ones - of 'flux', and of a 'bursting' faith of new ideas.

SAQ 12

1. The major factor that contributed to the increase in publishing activity towards the end of the nineteenth century lay in the increased efficiency of the processes of publishing and distributing printed material. This efficiency was made possible by an expanding market and the coming into existence of a greater number of outlets.

2. The expanding book market was largely composed of people from the working and lower-middle classes. According to Bradbury, these people were less interested in 'high-brow' literature, and more interested in 'sensationalist' publications.

3. The factor which led to the 'standardization of taste' during this period, according to Q.D. Leavis, was the degree of organisation and formalisation that was introduced at this time by societies such as book clubs. Writers, for commercial results, were now encouraged to appeal to a wide spectrum of people, a procedure which led to a bland and insipid form of literature.

4. The publishing industry has witnessed an enormous growth over the last 25 years. More books are being printed, and more people are reading them. The market for these books has also changed. Britain now exports 44.3% of its output. The kind of books has also changed, with the modern emphasis being put upon educational, scientific and technical publications at the expense of poetry and fiction.

5. Bradbury quotes Williams in saying that we now have a broad reading public for books (rather than just newspapers). But Bradbury points out the expansion of the market has been due less to the reading habits of social classes than to the fact that younger people are now reading books, particularly for educational

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purposes. This supports Bradbury's claim that it is institutions - such as schools and public libraries - that are the real bulk buyers of books.

6. The paperback revolution has, above all, meant cheaper books. It has also expanded the market for books, since a greater number of titles can be made available to a greater number of potential readers. It has also made inroads into the traditional market for books, threatening the continued existence of hardback books. Bradbury doubts whether in the long run the paperback revolution will improve the general standard of literature being produced and read in Britain.

SAQ 15

1. The relevant life-data are: sex, social class, education, nationality, family origins, place of residence, marriage, literary output, remuneration, honours, other jobs, political and religious beliefs, social contacts, conformism.

2. Writers are usually middle-class, and normally of professional rather than of business or commercial parents.

3. Among the secondary jobs that writers have held are: ministers, academics, public servants, barristers and bankers.

SAQ 14

1. The publisher chooses the material to be published, is responsible for its manufacture, and sees to its distribution.

2. The publisher 'creates' his public in the sense that he persuades potential readers to accept new patterns and habits of reading. The publisher can, for example, create a fashion for a certain author through clever manipulation of advertising. He can also promote certain genres, such as science fiction or the detective novel, and try to persuade people that these genres are more worth reading than other genres.

3. The publisher reaches his public in a number of ways. Firstly, by including his book in general bibliographical lists, and secondly, by advertising to the mass of society as a whole. This has certain draw-backs, since obviously only certain people will be interested in buying that particular work. For this reason, advertising tries to concentrate on certain sections of society, reaching them through the press and through television and radio.

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SAQ 15

1. The 'demand situation' refers to the pressures exerted upon the writer to conform to the expectations of the expanded reading public in the late nineteenth century.

2. The writing of the 'individualised' author tends to stress the purely personal process of creative writing. The demands, conventions and expectations that constitute the social or institutional role of literature are, thus, ignored or obviated, in favour of a more private language and a set of values based upon individual experience.

SAQ 16

1. Censors normally concern themselves with publications that contain religious, sexual and political subject matters.

2. According to Hall, there have been three major modes of literary criticism - 'legislative' (telling people how to write), 'theoretical' (advancing grand theories about the nature of literature), and 'descriptive' (describing the form and content of specific literary works). Recent literary criticism, from the eighteenth century onwards, has been largely descriptive. Once again, it is possible to detect three different stages in history of descriptive literary criticism. In its first phase, critics were still dependent upon patronage, and hence very circumspect in their judgements. They saw their task as improving the general level of taste in society. The second phase, which began in the early nineteenth century, followed wider concerns, and fostered a greater sense of the historical relevance of literature. The third period is not dominated by any single group of critics, but evinces a variety of descriptive approaches, from the textual-analytical American School to the more socially minded group in England centred around F.R. Leavis.

3. Book clubs have helped transform the whole face of publishing and reading literature in modern society. They have made possible a wider range of titles, and have attracted more people to the reading public.

4. Library users tend to be between 33 and 54, and from a higher social class, often possessing above-average education. This means that literary culture is still pursued by a minority of society, a fact which, according to certain commentators, poses a problem for culture in a democratic society.

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SAQ 17

1. According to Gans, because expensive films are the most popular ones, Hollywood industry, which has vast financial resources at its disposal and produces for a much larger market than British film companies do, is able to attract larger audiences.

2. The Hollywood film industry has also exploited the new market for films in the UK. This market consists of a young working-class audience, which wants to see a certain type of film.

3. The type of film that this new audience in Britain was attracted to was the 'action' film - westerns, mystery films and war and adventure films. The protagonists in such films often came from a vague class background (hence they could appeal to all viewers), and had few familial or institutional ties. The hero of such films functions as a positive member of the community in overcoming evil and the criminal element. These films often have a strong romantic dimension, although sexual contact is often neutralised by domestic denouements. The values that such films mediate are courage, strength, cunning, physical charm, fate and luck.

4. The new Hollywood film arose at a time when social mobility became a reality for many working-class people. These films thus emphasise that a middle-class life style is attainable by all who embody the right social values, such as a positive attitude to work.

5. According to Gans, British film producers have misread their market. In other words, they have not recognised that their audience has changed both in terms of age and in terms of its social composition. The heroes of British films do not correspond to the ideals of their cinema-going audience. This is because the British film industry still recruits its directors and producers from a limited social and educational sector of society.

6. The dominance of the Hollywood film has been challenged by the rise of television, and by the growth of local independent filmmakers in the UK who are now producing films that correspond to the tastes of the market.

SAQ 18

1. Leavis argues that the seventeenth century was characterised by an 'organic' relation between popular and sophisticated culture. This society of organic relations is juxtaposed to the fragmented society that came into existence after the Industrial Revolution, where different sections of society began to pursue different cultural activities.

2. The concept of the organic community is not just a cultural one. It is meant to comprehend <u>all</u> aspects of

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social life, from language to work. It is the central idea in Leavis's view of society. The organic community was a society where people were fully secure in occupying their place in a hierarchically ordered society, and had a direct contact with nature. It is, in fact, the world of the village.

3. Leavis blames the rise of industrialisation and the concomitant materialist values for the loss of the organic community. The 'Technologico-Benthamite Civilization' removed people from country to town, and dissolved traditional sources of values, such as religion. It also brought about a mechanisation of the mind, fostering the rational and purely functional at the expense of the inner world of feelings and sentiment.

4. Leavis's concept of the organic community is a romantic one.

   It is romantic, because Leavis surely idealises life in pre-industrial Britain; he selects only the good things (its homogeneity, its rural basis, etc.), and omits mention of the actual hardships that people would have been subject to, such as wars, poverty and pestilence.

   It is also an extremely ahistorical concept. Leavis shows little awareness of the development or change in history, or how cultures, or ways of living in general, are connected to concrete social, economic and political events, which are instrumental in changing cultural values. To think of reconstituting the organic community of the seventeenth century in the completely different context of the twentieth century reveals an inability to perceive the dynamics of historical change.

SAQ 19

1. The educated public is responsible for preserving real cultural values. Through their education, this social minority is able to resist the pressures of 'mass civilisation', which seeks to standardise and corrupt the fine linguistic and artistic distinctions upon which a real culture is based. The educated public is, in short, the harbourer of 'standards', which it disseminates through society, allowing the individual to choose between the 'finer living of an age' and that which is without value.

2. An educated public can only be fostered in modern society through the wider disseminations of cultural values, particularly through educational institutions, such as universities. However, not all existing universities have this function; Leavis is opposed to the university, where technological and scientific topics are taught to a 'mass' body of students, but favours instead a university that would base its

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curriculum upon English literature, because that subject lends itself to the establishing of a mature, rounded, humanistic intelligence.

3. Various criticisms have been levelled at Leavis's ideas. First, he has been criticised as overly elitist, that is, in favouring a small section of society at the expense of the majority. This is something that runs counter to the political development of twentieth-century history, which has been, at least in certain countries, to involve more and more people into the workings of society. Leavis also overstresses the role of literature and literary criticism in establishing standards in society. This is surely an exaggeration of the importance of the literary critic. Philosophers, sociologists and psychologists could all contribute to the preservation of a humanistic culture.

   Finally, Leavis, as Connell points out in his essay, leaves too many questions unanswered about the role of culture in society. Who are the educated public? Are they necessarily connected to any social class? What is the relationship between the individual artist and this public? Do the two work together? How do we account for artists like Blake who had no public support? Leavis leaves these and other questions unanswered in his often rhetorical tirade against what he sees to be his main enemies - on the one hand, mass civilisation and its corrupt values, and coteries like the Bloomsbury group, with their obscurantism.

SAQ 20

1. 'Mass society' is seen by Swingewood as a society lacking any traditional centres of moral authority, such as the family. Because of this, people are unable to resist 'manipulation from above', resist manufacture of opinion that takes place in mass media, such as newspapers.

2. The 'culture industry' consists of all those institutions of popular culture and the mass media. It is called an 'industry' because it functions according to the same mechanisms as any other industry in capitalist society. For example, it aims to maximise its profit and thus tries to sell its wares to the largest market possible, even if this means making use of advertising and other manipulative techniques. Since the culture produced by the culture industry is, for obvious reasons, uncritical of society, the consumer of this culture comes to acquiesce to the status quo and the values of capitalist society.

3. Adorno and Horkheimer argued that the collapse of the family ultimately led to a loss of freedom for the individual. The point they make is that the individual requires a source of values other than one provided by

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the state. If, as in communist countries, the state alone becomes responsible for inculcating moral values (the process is referred to here as 'socialisation'), then effective political opposition to the state eventually becomes impossible.

4. According to Horkheimer, genuine art (as opposed to that produced by the 'culture industry') is essentially oppositional in nature.

   This is because art is often 'utopian'. It provides us with the vision of a better world. It also, particularly in the work of modern avant garde artists like James Joyce or Picasso, attempts an imaginative reconstruction of the world, and hence challenges the assumption upon which the status quo is founded.

SAQ 21

1. According to Marx, ideology may include any system of ideas (legal, religious, economic, political or cultural) that serves to justify, legitimise or in other ways support and reproduce the economic and political status quo. Putting it in a nut-shell, Engels once said that 'the ruling ideas in any society are the ideas of the ruling class'. According to this view, ideology serves the interest of the ruling class.

2. Gramsci's concept of 'hegemony' is related to the Marxist concept of 'ideology'. Gramsci pointed out that the ruling class is able to perpetuate its political dominance in society because it has at its disposal institutions, such as the church and the school, that argue for continuity and tradition, and inculcate a respect for law and order. Although such institutions are apparently non-political, they have a political effect, because they contribute to the control of the ruling class over society.

3. When writing about ideology, Marx and Engels often gave the impression that ideology was simply 'determined' by economic interests, that if people belonged to a certain class in society they would automatically follow the ideology that best suited the political and economic interests of that class. It has become clear from various historical events, such as the failed German Revolution of 1918, that people often harbour ideas and sentiments that do not serve their immediate political interests (e.g., many working-class people did not support that revolution), but instead, seem to have more deep-seated values. This was a problem that Gramsci grappled with, and his concept of hegemony is intended precisely to explain how it is that conservative values can permeate a society. Althusser's contribution to this debate lies in his insistence that ideology, far from being a mere 'reflection' of class interests, has its own continuing existence, and changes much more

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slowly than events in the economic and political base of society. For this reason, Althusser has defined ideology as a 'material practice' in order to emphasise that ideas can determine social behaviour rather than just vice versa.

SAQ 22

1. (a) In general, the case for the founding of Israel is presented as both morally just and as a civilising mission. The British and the French are presented as simply interested in power politics. The Arabs are presented in an even worse light, as treacherous, violent, untrustworthy and as belonging to an inferior culture (notice the description of Arab eating habits in excerpt 1.

   (b) Every section of the novel begins with a quotation from the Bible, supporting the Israeli cause. Book 2 begins with a quotation from Leviticus, where God promises Moses that the land of Israel will be his 'possession'.

   (c) According to the narrator of the novel, the Arab people of Palestine had 'accepted the return of the Jews', but were tricked by their leaders, who promised them 'easy victories, loot and rape'. The Arabs were defeated and fled to neighbouring Arab states, dispirited and confused. They have refused the generous offer of assistance from the United Nations to be resettled in 'lush, fertile land' in other Arab states. The refugees are not allowed to accept this offer, because other Arab states wish to exploit the present situation to increase hatred of the Israelis.

2. (a) The kibbutz is offered throughout the novel as an ideal of community life. At times, it involves hardship and a willingness to sacrifice personal and private gain for the sake of others (and notice how everyone is prepared to make that sacrifice - see excerpt 8). The end result, however, is something that borders on paradise (it is called 'heaven' in excerpt 9).

   (b) The kibbutz also represents the height of agricultural efficiency, and a centre of civilisation and culture. The Israelis are also magnanimous in extending their superior know-how to the Arab population.

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